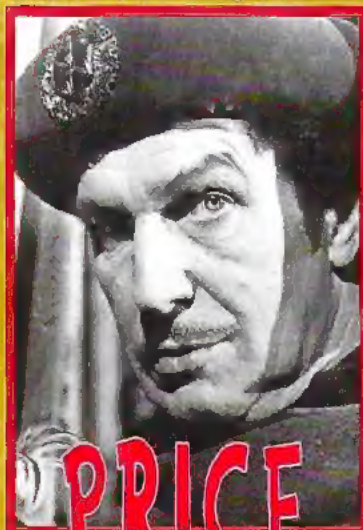
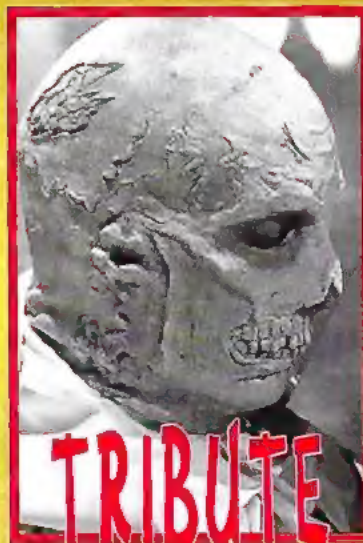




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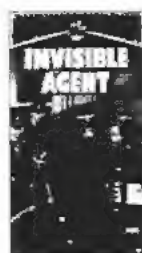
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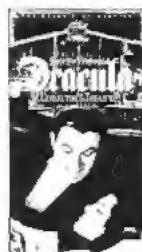
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**COVER PHOTOS:** Ida Lupino and Basil Rathbone in **THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1939) and three of the many faces of Mr. Vincent Price.



# Scarlet Letters

Thank you for your story. It was nice talking to you, and I wish you much success in the years to come.

Ruth Roman  
Laguna Beach, CA

What a pity that, in the interesting review of *SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE MUSICAL* which appeared in your summer issue, my name was taken in vain. I have never met Leslie Bricusse or heard the music he composed for the musical, nor have I ever met Dame Barbara Cartland. Is it possible that the reviewer's "source" can have muddled me up with a former sister-in-law, the late Mrs. Anthony Harwood?

Jean Conan Doyle  
London, England

David Stuart Davies replies: I'm pleased that Dame Jean has corrected my piece of misinformation regarding the early stages of *SHERLOCK HOLMES THE MUSICAL* and her supposed involvement with it. It is most likely as Dame Jean suggests, that my informant has mixed her up with Mrs. Anthony Harwood. I'm equally delighted she found the article of interest. It is lovely to think that she retains such a keen interest in her father's work.

It was a pleasure to see the ARON IN WONDERLAND story in your fall issue. I hope your readers enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed being interviewed by Kevin G. Shinnick.

It is completely understandable that there were a couple of minor errors in the text, considering that Mr. Shinnick had to plough through over two hours of my recollections that were taped during our often-hilarious phone interview. So, a few corrections if I may:

"Red Fergin" should have read "Redford", as in Robert Redford.

Cecil B. DeMille's wonderful secretary for 53 years was Florence Cole. She passed away at age 81 in March of 1981.

The shooting schedule for *GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI* was four weeks. If it had been four months, we would have all had to be institutionalized!

The word "serape" (the large, colorful Mexican blanket-shawl) was misunderstood to be "sur-

optic". Not terribly important, but I didn't want some graphic designer spending the next five years trying to find out what a "suroptic design" was.

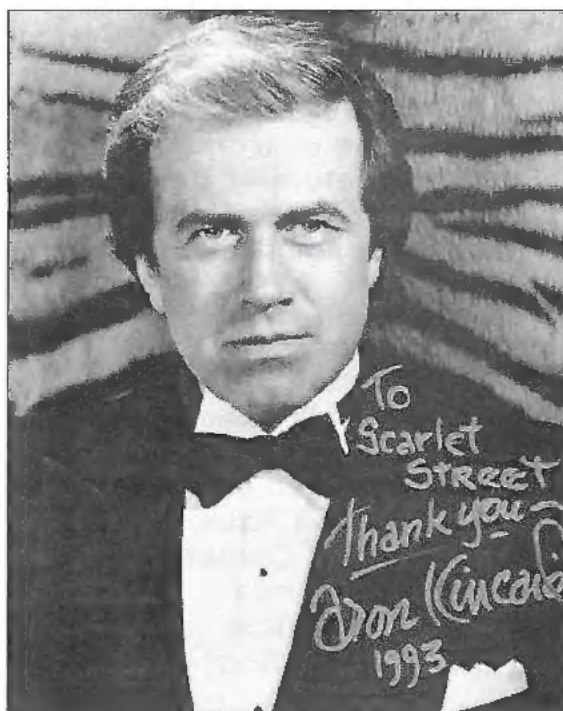
I was John Forsythe's law partner on *BACHELOR FATHER*. With my many canine performances, it is easy to see how it was mistakenly printed *lab*!

Everything else was letter perfect. Nice work, Kevin! My very best wishes for the continued success of *Scarlet Street*. You deserve the very best.

Aron Kincaid  
Beverly Hills, CA

I am a huge Sherlock Holmes fan, and I've watched every episode of the Jeremy Brett series since it began on MYSTERY! This included *THE CASE-BOOK* series shown two years ago. My station showed five episodes, starting with *THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT* and ending with *SHOSCOMBE OLD PLACE*. Now that my address has changed because of college, I am looking at different TV listings. The

## WANTED: MORE READERS LIKE . . .



Aron Kincaid



PBS station here is rerunning *CASE-BOOK*, and I was surprised to see a sixth episode: *LADY FRANCES CARFAX*. Since I have no TV here, and different reruns are shown at home, I have no way to see it. I was wondering if this episode was available on videotape. If it is, could you tell me where to order it? If it is not, maybe you know whether A&E will show it in their rerun schedule. In fact, any way to obtain this film would be terrific.

R. G. Knott  
Gambier, OH

You're at college without a television? Don't you know that's one of your basic loafing tools? *LADY FRANCES* will likely turn up on A&E, but she'll be missing about five minutes cut for commercials—and that simply will not do for a true fan. The complete episode is available from MPI Home Video.

Gosh! What a magazine! Since I got my first *Scarlet Street* (#4) I recognized that this is quite the magazine for me as a Holmesian, as a Hammer fan, and an admirer of old-fashioned thrills and chills. And what a pleasure to find all my favorites in your pages: Chris Lee and Vincent Price, the wonderful Peter Cushing (as for me, I would love to be "disturbed" by his phone call at such an early hour), and, in a coming issue, the great Robert Bloch. I'm sure you will find a niche for Ray Harryhausen in the near future, and I would love to see a feature on such great Jules Verne films as *20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA*, *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH*, and *AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS*, to name but a few.

All best wishes for a bright future for *Scarlet Street*.

Uwe Sommerlad  
The Cushing Company  
Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Continued on page 11



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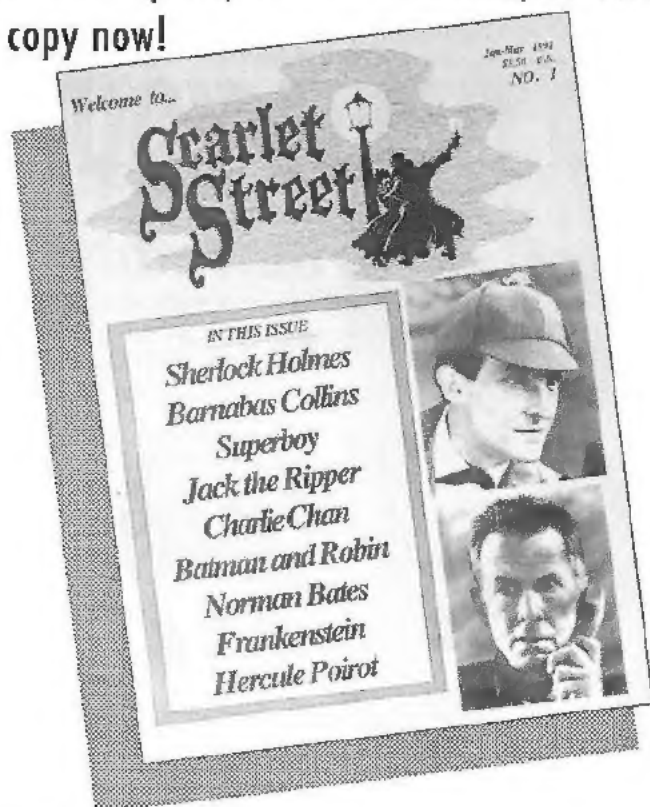


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Is *Scarlet Street* worth the price? Hey, don't just take our word for it:

Gosh! Wow! Boy, oh boy! *Scarlet Street* has taken a quantum jump into the lead among imagi-movie magazines!

—Forrest J Ackerman

I loved the "spread" on my work and all the nice comments.

—Vincent Price

*Scarlet Street* is a delight!

—George Baxt

It's a really intriguing magazine. I enjoyed every article.

—Jack Larson

Everything about *Scarlet Street* appeals to the perverse lust for lunacy in me. Congratulations on a job well done.

—Rex Reed

Your standards are beautifully high.

—Yvette Vickers

It's really outstanding!

—Robert Bloch

It's truly a terrific magazine! I don't know how you manage to pack so much in one issue. If you can't find something you like in this publication, you might as well give up.

—Neal Barrett, Jr.

I'm delighted to say that the magazine is of an exceptionally high literary quality.

—Fred Olen Ray

I enjoyed the whole magazine. It is certainly entertaining to look at, and a good solid "read", too. I wish *Scarlet Street* a long, mysterious, and horrific future!

—Elizabeth Shepherd



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No. 5: Barbara Hale, Patrick Macnee, Jack Larson, THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED, Jeremy Brett, Edward Hardwicke, Christopher Lee.



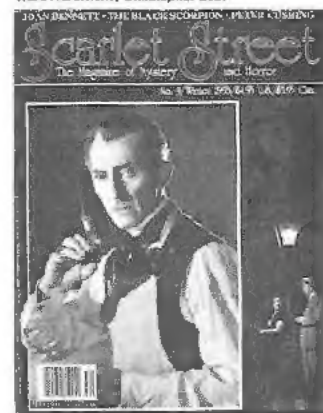
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No. 11: Shelley Winters, Curtis Harrington, Gale Sondergaard, THE FANTASTIC FOUR, Abbott & Costello, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?, TEENAGERS FROM OUTER SPACE, Bob Hastings.



No. 12: Ruth Roman, THE KILLING KIND, THE UNINVITED, Ruth Hussey, I BURY THE LIVING, Alon Kincald, Carroll O'Neil, The Bela Lugosi Scrapbook, Zacherley's Lost TV Show, Elizabeth Russell.



No. 13: Ida Lupino, Terry Kilburn, Bill Campbell, Jeffrey Combs, Howard Duff, Lovecast on Film, THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, FIEND WITHOUT A FACE, ED WOOD, Honor Hosts.

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# Frankly Scarlet



Well, it's anniversary time again! Not only that, it's a lucky issue—#13! A year ago, I trumpeted the fact that *Scarlet Street*, marking the conclusion of its second year, was printing 20 times the number of copies of its first issue. Well, guess what, gang? As we conclude our third spine-tingling year, we're now printing 50 times that initial number!

As Rosemary said to her cute I'll devil, "We've come a long way, baby"—and if you doubt that fact just grab a copy of our dazzling new reprint of *Scarlet Street* #1, available soon via the enticing ad on page 6. A lot of you faceless fiends out there have been clamoring for us to again make our first issue available, and here's our anniversary present to you—complete with two covers and some special added features by our staff of horrific hex-perts. (The original cover and text of #1 is reprinted exactly as it was the first time 'round, errors and all. Say, how does that Sherlock chappie spell his last name...?)

It's not for nothing that many of our readers consider *Scarlet Street* the best mag of its kind—and we've got a helluva lot in store for the coming year. So, don't forget what the late, great Vincent Price said to his kid brother, Al "David" Hedison, when he found him trapped in that spider's web at the rocky finale of *THE FLY*: "Stick around!"

Or was it the spider who said, "Don't look, now, but your brother's open!"

\*\*\*

Speaking of the Peerless Price, a tip of the editorial head (well, I don't own a hat) to those friends and coworkers of the late star who took time out from their busy—in some cases, murderous—schedules to say a few heartfelt words. Personally, I'm proud that one of the Merchant of Menace's last interviews appeared in our pages, and that he wrote and told us how much

he'd enjoyed our accompanying tribute to him.

\*\*\*

There's been a change or two in this issue's lineup, so if you're searching for the concluding part of *Scarlet Street*'s exclusive interview with director Curtis Harrington, look no further than our spring issue, due in April. Ditto our continuing investigation of the Granada Sherlock Holmes series, *BETTER HOLMES AND WATSON*, which has also skipped an issue, the better to run a terrific talk with Edward Hardwicke alongside a review of the first episode in which the actor appeared.

That said, the issue you hold in your hands (unless you're unbelievably nearsighted and have it nailed to your forehead) is, for me, extra special. All Sherlock Holmes fans have their faves among the actors who have played the



role, and their faves among the films made by those actors. There are three stars I consider perfection as the Great Detective: Jeremy Brett, Peter Cushing, and Basil Rathbone. (I have a fondness, too, for John Neville and Robert Stephens.) Rathbone, in my opinion, was never better than in 1939's *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, and the film is firmly entrenched in my Top Ten Holmes List, along with *THE SCARLET CLAW* (1944), *THE PEARL OF DEATH* (1944), *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* (1959), *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1965), and *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (1970), among others. (Brett reigns supreme on the small screen, of course.)

Fan that I am of *THE ADVENTURES*, I find this issue's interviews

with Ida Lupino and Terence Kilburn, both of whom appeared with Rathbone and Nigel Bruce in that glorious film, especially compelling. (There's also the fact that, brief though Ida Lupino's comments may be, they are more than she has given any other magazine in at least a decade. Nor is Terence Kilburn known for granting interviews; he agreed to this one only because he'd be discussing Rathbone, whom he greatly admired.)

So journey with us to Baker Street, situated on the back lot of 20th Century Fox, and don't forget to drop by some other notable addresses as well, including the San Francisco of Dashiell Hammett and Armistead Maupin, and the Arkham and Dunwich of H. P. Lovecraft. It's a strange land, Wayward Ones, but with *Scarlet Street* on the sign post, you needn't be a stranger in it.

\*\*\*

It's come to my demented attention here on the *Street* that sterner measures are again being called for regarding sex and violence in the media. It's not my intention to single out those books, movies, personalities, and programs that have specifically come under fire; the cry for labelling, for censorship, for enforced "decency" affects all aspects of show business.

Naturally, I'm concerned. Never would I want to trust in our readers' abilities to avoid endangering themselves, to act rashly or moronically, to ignore entirely the dictates of common sense and rational thought, and run as written an article dealing with "adult" or "dangerous" themes or subject matter. Never would I want parents to take responsibility for their own children when, through government legislation, they can force the whole nation to do so. Never would I suggest that they monitor their kids' viewing, or that locking up the ol' boob tube when they are not present is preferable to locking up an entire industry.

Still, there's no denying the cold, hard fact that some folks haven't sense enough to use the brain Baron Frankenstein gave them, and with that in mind *Scarlet Street* would like to take the opportunity to print this warning as a service both to the Community at Large and to those Sterling Individuals who have sought, from time immemorial, to deny others those forms of entertainment and enlightenment which they, the Sterling Ones, deem inappropriate.

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ments, or adopt certain attitudes or philosophies, addressed in the pages of this issue of *Scarlet Street*. These include reanimating the dead; opening mystic gateways to return ancient and monstrous races to earthly dominance; stealing the crown jewels disguised as a London bobby; living in San Francisco; wearing white angora sweaters while directing the worst movies ever made; having one's brain sucked out by an invisible energy force; starring in a film produced and directed by Larry Buchanan; accepting a role for which one is totally unsuited in a major motion picture; stalking Ida Lupino with a South American *bolas* as a weapon; living in Gotham City; finding the one note on the chromatic scale that irritates the common housefly; and editing a mystery and horror magazine.

Past issues have examined the pleasures to be found in strangling Shelley Winters; slicing up schoolgirls; training poisonous snakes; disemboweling Whitechapel streetwalkers; stabbing Shelley Winters; beheading vampires; wearing bow

ties, pillbox hats, mouse ears, or nothing; venturing on the moor when the powers of evil are exalted; dressing grown men in diapers; drowning Shelley Winters; sticking supernaturally-charged pins in a cemetery map; using trick binoculars; eating live chickens; adopting baby Gorgos; dining at Collinwood; marrying an alligator; sleeping with Darryl F. Zanuck; acting with Fred MacMurray; swimming with Mr. Moto; coating beautiful women in wax; zapping small, noisy dogs with ray guns; and luring Shelley Winters into heavy traffic. Don't try any of this at home.

Follow these simple instructions, *Scarlet Streeters*, and you will surely be back for our spring issue. It's a loving tribute to Mother's Day, and if you don't find *Scarlet Street* #14 literally stuffed with goodies, well, my name isn't Norman ... I mean Norma ... I mean ...

*Richard Valley*

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## SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 4

I just received the latest *Scarlet Street* and wanted to thank you for running the review of *Guignol*.

You guys keep topping yourselves every issue. So far I've read only the articles on THE UNINVITED, Curtis Harrington, Richard Valley's appreciation of THE KILLING KIND (Is this one on video?), and the truly spectacular piece by John Brunas on I BURY THE LIVING. Reading about Garfinkle's original ending confirmed my feeling that this is one of the near-classics that someone should consider remaking now.

George Hatch  
Editor, Horror's Head Press  
Staten Island, NY

For the past year, I have been a subscriber of *Scarlet Street*, beginning with Issue #6. You have been a great source of information in my research of film noir movies. One of my favorites is the 1949 movie THE WINDOW.

I enjoyed reading your article on WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN? I purchased the video, and I agree with director Curtis Harrington that the movie lost its impact because the ending was revealed by the movie

poster. Unfortunately, the video box also gives away the ending and takes away the surprise.

I hope you can help me in my quest down Memory Lane! I'm writing to ask your help in locating a movie I saw as a young child in New York in the early 60s. The movie revolved around 10 men who wore masks throughout the entire film, and were part of a robbery scheme. They were dressed in business suits of the 50s. At the end of the film, all of the men revealed their identities to the audience. I believe some were big name actors. It may have been a film by William Castle, but I can't remember the name of the movie.

Keep up the good work!  
Tony Lamorte  
Hialeah, FL

You may have combined a movie or two in your trip down Memory Lane, Tony. OCEAN'S ELEVEN (1960) involves the sort of robbery scheme you mention. THE LIST OF ADRIAN MESSENGER (1963) includes a gaggle of stars in elaborate makeups; they reveal their true identities during the closing credits. A common denominator: Frank Sinatra appears in both movies. You may also have in mind the final episode of THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN, in which men in lead

masks and business suits commit a series of robberies.

Thanks so much for your fascinating and attractively illustrated mystery magazine. The bloodcurdling "vampire" issue (#12) arrived in today's mail, and I have already read some of the articles, including those on THE UNINVITED, one of my very favorite mysteries.

Of course, I also read and list all the Sherlockian items in *Scarlet Street* for my bibliography, *The Universal Sherlock Holmes*, which is scheduled for publication, in three volumes, next spring.

I love the photograph of Basil Rathbone and Ida Lupino in the ad on page 6. They do make a handsome couple. In my opinion, Rathbone was (and still is) Sherlock Holmes, and Lupino could easily have been the woman (Irene Adler).

Thanks again for the "Halloween treat" (your magazine)!

Ronald B. De Waal  
Salt Lake City, UT

BAD GIRLS FROM MARS an "instantly disposable classic"! I find it hard to believe that a statement like that would be bandied about so freely in an editorial that promotes



STUDS and MAURY POVICH as something worthwhile! Maybe you guys do deserve to live in New Jersey!

All in all a good issue (#12). I loved the letters column—so much controversy. I agree with Tom Weaver on the sacred-cow nature of Hollywood's black listed professionals. While I have no particular axe to grind with any of the so-called black-listees, I don't believe the subject needs to shroud the proceedings unnecessarily.

Likewise, Richard Gordon's letter was great. I've always wanted to know more about Edward L. Cahn. His body of work cannot be denied, but the man simply eludes the attention he deserves.

Ruth Roman—very nice piece, but no one mentioned her costarring role in IMPULSE, an early 1970s production shot in Florida by director Bill Grefe (DEATH CURSE OF TARTU) in which Roman plays a foolish matron who falls for psycho-killer William Shatner. She was quite good in it, too!

Carroll Borland—lovely lady and interesting, too. She was kind enough to appear in our films SCALPS and BIOHAZARD, and did a bang-up job.

One last question: Is Jessie Lilley "strapped" down to that table helpless

on page 10, or is my imagination running away with me again?

Fred Olen Ray  
Hollywood, CA

*It's always fun to hear from Fred, one of our many friends in California, the Natural Disaster Capital of the World. Apologies if we inadvertently implied that STUDS was worthier than BAD GIRLS FROM MARS; "whatever turns you on" is our motto. Regarding Madame Publisher's table-hopping, she indeed had to be strapped down—shortly after reading Tom Weaver's letter last issue*

☐

Having read Tom Weaver's remarks in the letters section of *Scarlet Street* #12, in which he plummets to the defense of McCarthyism, I now find it extremely appropriate to apply the words "poverty row" not only to the level of filmmaking with which Weaver is most comfortable, but to his thought processes as well.

Weaver misses the point that, in the Land of the Free, nobody deserves to have "earned" a spot on the blacklist, no matter their beliefs. It isn't that a few innocents, mistakenly accused of radical thought, were "wrongly discriminated against" by making it onto the blacklist; it's that everyone on the

list was victimized, because the bloody list itself should never have existed.

Weaver paints himself in conservative colors, but a true conservative believes that the government should keep out of an individual's private life. How Monogram Mind can reconcile that view with McCarthy's persecution of liberals, intellectuals, and even communists, is astonishing.

Doubtless Weaver will put this down to the unpatriotic opinion of yet another bleeding heart—but I'd rather have my heart bleed than my brain atrophy.

Duncan MacBeth  
Nutley, NJ

☐

Now I understand why Tom Weaver doesn't appreciate the subversive elements of Hammer Horror. He probably thinks that Terence Fisher was a communist.

Anyone who still refers to ultra-capitalist Jane Fonda as "Hanoi Jane", implies that discrimination may sometimes be justified, and laments that multimillionaire Chuck Heston has been the victim of "reverse discrimination" because of his ultraconservative views should be on THE 700 CLUB at Pat Robertson's side, castigat-

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ing horror movies for turning us all into Satan worshippers.

Get a life, Tom. Reality is not a Monogram Picture.

Bruce G. Hallenbeck  
Valatie, NY

I'd like to respond to a statement made by that pompous nitwit, David Geffen (quoted in *Scarlet Street* #12), regarding Anne Rice's perfectly justifiable dismay over Neil "La Ego" Jordan's choice of Tom Cruise to play Lestat in his film, *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*.

Rice's character Lestat is physically modeled after Stan Rice (her husband) and actor Rutger Hauer. Any writer would be upset if Hollywood picked an actor (and I use the term very loosely here) who in no way, shape, or form fit her description of him.

Ms. Rice has suffered the full brunt of Hollywood's hedging over the past 17 years with regard to the transformation of her novel from the printed page to the screen. Her book was bandied about from motion-picture studio to made-for-TV miniseries, and at one point, even a Broadway musical, while the industry sweated over the book's subject matter—two male vampires and a female child. Not to mention all the atrocities that were committed on her original story in the interim! Ms.

Rice tried valiantly to salvage her vision by creating a female vampire to replace Louis in an attempt to ease the minds of La La Land's hangup about the novel's content.

Using a Cher or Meryl Streep type as a model for her character, Anne rewrote an existing screenplay in an attempt to appease the powers that be at Lorimar (the next in a line of wacko production companies). Her new character was a woman who, like her male vampires, had androgynous features and a strong personality, and was perfectly capable of fighting her own battles in a century when women who acted "like men" were looked upon with disdain. Lestat is immediately attracted to her because she resembles his own mother, Gabrielle. Ms. Rice never intended to have Cher herself play the part.

In an age when most authors are happy to "take the money and run", I applaud Anne Rice for all her efforts to fight for what she believes is right for her legion of readers and her characters. Perhaps Warner Bros., Geffen, Cruise, and Jordan might win more support at the box office if, strictly for the good of the project, they had put aside their overblown conceits and antiquated ideas about an actor's last film and the money it made (or didn't make).

Besides, I believe that Anne Rice and horror-film fans far outnumber Cruise groupies, and it will fall to us as to whether or not this film is worthy of Anne's enormous talent and our monetary support. As it stands now, I'm going to wait for this turkey to show up on cable TV and have myself a good laugh when Cruise and Brad Pitt make their entrances.

Deborah Del Vecchio  
Coauthor, *Peter Cushing: The Gentle Man of Horror*  
Westwood, NJ

I believe that Richard Valley, in his *BETTER HOLMES AND WATSON* column in *Scarlet Street* #12, is seriously mistaken if he imagines that Holmes would have included Colonel Sebastian Moran in his list of the four smartest men in London. Nowhere in the Canon is there the slightest hint that he considered Moran to be especially smart. Dangerous, yes, but not smart. Indeed, seeing that the good colonel was fooled by a rather transparent ruse in "The Adventure of the Empty House", Moran may well have been the fourth dumbest man in London.

Also, can we really believe that Holmes would have left his brother off the list? So the list most probably goes (1) Mycroft, (2) Sherlock Holmes, (3) James Moriarty, (4) John Clay.

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Will *Scarlet Street* ever give coverage to the spoofs and parodies of Sherlock Holmes, of which there have been many?

Donald Alan Webster  
 Hapeville, GA

Richard Valley replies: I may be mistaken, but not seriously. Still, if Colonel Moran must be considered one of the dumbest men in London, what must we make of Professor Moriarty? What intelligent man appoints, as his second in command, an idiot? For that matter, was Moriarty using his smarts when, after traveling Holmes all over Europe, he didn't simply draw a gun at Reichenbach and shoot the detective dead?

*Scarlet Street* #12 just arrived at my laboratory. Accolades to this keen ish—and a big thanks for printing my letter. Smashing interviews with Ruth Roman, Carroll Borland, Aron Kincaid, and Bobby "Boris" Pickett. What a great personal reminiscence by Richard Scrivani about DISC-O-TEEN. I love this kind of article. Also enjoyed the look at the much neglected THE KILLING KIND, plus the other interviews and features.

Say, a recent episode of LOIS & CLARK: THE NEW ADVENTURES

OF SUPERMAN has a cameo by Francine York, looking lovely as ever.

Well, I'll let you go. Gotta try and find a fly that's buzzing around my crypt yelling "Help me."

Conrad Widener  
 S. Connellsville, PA

On a whim, I recently purchased my first issue of *Scarlet Street*, having been vaguely familiarized with your title through advertisements, and drawn in by the power of Bela Lugosi on your cover. Little did I suspect I would fall in love that night!

Though just 20 years of age, I've been a lifelong fan of mystery and horror—the Universal classics in particular. Naturally I was thrilled by Lugosi's unearthed scrapbook, but a more sublime pleasure awaited me in your interview with Carroll Borland. MARK OF THE VAMPIRE is one classic I've not yet viewed. I knew of it, but never placed it high on my list of priority viewing since it wasn't an "official" Dracula film. That was before I read the interview! Presently I am seeking a copy to obtain for my home collection.

And need I say it? Ms. Borland is so beautiful! I sat staring at the pictures

you provided, my mouth hanging agape, fantasizing about traveling back to meet her à la SOMEWHERE IN TIME! It seems the first Daughter of Darkness has claimed another victim, some six decades after her undead debut. Thank you for a great publication. You are assured another reader for as long as you run.

Vincent Barajas  
 Houston, TX

Don't worry, Vincent; unlike Richard Kimble, we intend to keep running. If you're a fan of Dracula movies, stake a claim to *Scarlet Street* #8, available on page 7. It's chock full of the suckers.

I am writing this on the day of Vincent Price's death, which coincided with the arrival of *Scarlet Street* #12. It goes without saying that this gentleman will be missed by the world at large.

I had the pleasure of meeting and talking at length with Mr. Price in the early 70s, when he spoke at my university. The normal adjectives do not convey the feelings I and others had for him after that appearance. A true Renaissance man, he, like Peter Cushing, and possibly Karloff, would have been comfortable in any age.



Like many, I grew up in the 50s and 60s attending double- and triple-feature matinées. Our theater was just a block from my house and, whenever Vincent Price was appearing, my friends and I would spend entire weekends watching and rewatching his movies. His impact on us was profound, scaring the life out of us with that voice, terrorizing us with his subtle mannerisms, making us believe in supernatural horrors. As I grew older, I discovered movies like *LAURA* and other non horror pictures of his, which illustrated a tremendous range and versatility. Modern video has given us the opportunity to see most of his pictures, and for that we must all be grateful.

My respect, admiration, and love go out to him as he takes a final curtain. At times like this, it is often said that there will never be another like him. In Vincent Price's case, no truer words have been spoken. Those of us who have been touched in some way by him, by his movies, television appearances (I never missed a MYSTERY! on PBS when he was hosting), lectures, or books, let us give thanks for having had that experience. One of the outstanding personalities of this century. An issue devoted to him is a must for *Scarlet Street* to do. Good-bye, Vincent.

Tim Raab  
Fishers, IN

We had known for some time that Vincent Price was in failing health. That is why we printed (in *Scarlet Street* #7) not only one of the Merchant of Menace's last interviews, but a special tribute section—so that Mr. Price might see for himself how people loved and respected both the man and his work. For more on Vincent the Great, turn to page 25.

☐  
Congratulations on another fine issue. I was very pleased to see an in-depth piece on one of my favorite films, *THE UNINVITED*, and particularly happy to see it authored by the astute Michael Brunas. How about a similar treatment for *THE HAUNTING*, the one ghost film I feel actually surpasses *THE UNINVITED*?

Keep up the good work.  
Bryan Senn  
Coauthor, *Fantastic Cinema Subject Guide*  
Kent, WA

☐  
I'd like to see a Lex Barker feature, with him as your magazine cover. Even though Lex died 20 years ago, fans all over the world still remember him as one of the best superheroes. No other Tarzan has Lex Barker's gor-

geous looks and ideal height, with pleasing handsome physique and believable acting ability.

Michael Chow  
Hong Kong

☐  
I would like to see a cover feature on the late, great actress Anna May Wong, who starred in the 1937 flick *DAUGHTER OF SHANGHAI*, and two South of the Border horror flicks (1961's *DOCTOR OF DOOM* and 1964's *WRESTLING WOMEN VS. THE AZTEC MUMMY*).

Cliff Dunlap  
Tacoma, WA

☐  
I purchased my first issue of *Scarlet Street* (#12) at my local grocery store and was very pleased! I purchased this issue especially for the piece on Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*. I'm an avid Rice fan!

I must say that Geffen Pictures' choice of Tom Cruise as Lestat is sad dening. Is Anne Rice such a small part of this production that her opinion about who should play the role of Lestat is worthless? Who is more important, the actor or the writer? After all, if it weren't for writers like Anne Rice and Stephen King, Hollywood wouldn't have stories to put up on the big screen.

I am very skeptical about Mr. Cruise as Lestat and Brad Pitt as Louis. (Shouldn't the roles be reversed or something?) I believe this skepticism is what Mr. Cruise is counting on. I mean, if he pulls this off he'll be hailed as one of the greatest character actors today—and if he can pull off a tall French blonde with the grace of a panther, I'll be the first to hail him as such!

We'll all have to pay our dollars at the box office, drown our fears in buttered popcorn, and send up a prayer to the gods that all will go well and Mr. Cruise will do Anne Rice (and the Vampire Lestat) justice.

Emanuella Lorana  
Virginia, MN

☐  
While we have our fears about the box-office appeal of Tom Cruise as the Vampire Lestat, we have no doubt that a sizeable audience would pay to see him pull off a tall French blonde. That's show biz!

☐  
I read Earl Logan's story *I WAS A TEENAGE*... in *Scarlet Street* #11 with great interest, and I felt that it was important for me to address some of the misinformed comments directed at my film *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF*.

First of all, Logan presents a totally inaccurate account of the way Gene

Fowler Jr., came to direct the movie. Gene's wife, Marjorie, who was the film editor of my film *CRIME OF PASSION*, starring Barbara Stanwyck, told me that her husband Gene (who was a film editor) very much wanted a chance to direct a feature. We all had lunch together and I met with Gene several times and signed him as the director. Contrary to what Logan wrote, Gene and Marge Fowler thought the picture would really hit big at the box office!

Logan writes that I was not able to spend much time on the set because I was "too busy promoting other projects"—*I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF* was my personal project and I was on the set at all times for the entire production, which was only seven days. Fowler did not re-write any of the script. The script was written by Aben Kandel and myself from an original story by me. (I understand that this erroneous information was taken from an interview which Gene Fowler gave *Filmfax* magazine.)

I feel that my fans should have the straight story, thus this letter to you. Continued good luck with your fine magazine!

Herman Cohen  
Herman Cohen Productions  
Hollywood, CA

We received Mr. Cohen's letter just as we were wrapping up this issue's letter column and managed to squeeze it in. For more on the man who made *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF* (1957), *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* (1959), *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1965), and many others, look for *Scarlet Street*'s multipart interview with Herman Cohen, coming to your newsstand (or mailbox) soon.

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**INVASION U.S.A.** (1952) Peggy Castle, Gerald Mohr, Dan O'Herlihy, Noel Neil. The U.S. is invaded by unknown enemy troops. Bombs are dropping on major cities and installations including an H-bomb on New York. A 50s gem. From 35mm. \$167

**GEISHA GIRL** (1952) William Andrews, Martha Hyer, Archer MacDonald. A forgotten sci-fi film! A mad scientist develops explosive pills more powerful than nuclear bombs. They fall into the hands of two wacky American G.I.s. The Japanese police send in a super hyonoid to help. From 16mm. \$168

**THE JUNGLE** (1952) Rod Cameron, Cesar Romero, Mario Vinard. The sole survivor of a jungle expedition returns to civilization with tales of giant, woolly mammoths slumbering in the deepest part of the Indian jungle. Another expedition sets out to find these prehistoric beasts. From 35mm. \$174

**KING DINOSAUR** (1955) Bill Bryant, Wanda Curtis, Douglas Henderson. An earth rocket lands on a newly discovered planet. The expedition members discover a strange island filled with marauding dinosaurs. They use an A-bomb on it at the film's climax. From 35mm. \$175

**HORRORS OF SPIDER ISLAND** (1958) Alex D'Arcy, Barbara Valentine. Hilarious schlock about a plane load of models that crash lands on a jungle island. Their manager is bitten by a giant spider and turned into a hairy monster. Ahh. From 35mm. \$166

**LAST WOMAN ON EARTH** (1960) Anthony Carbone, Betsy Jones-Moreland. NOW IN COLOR! Three people are faced with grim realities when they discover they're the only survivors of a world nuclear holocaust. Roger Corman directed. From 35mm. \$662

**GAPPA** (1967) Tami Kawai, Yoko Yamamoto, Koi Wada, Yui Otsuka. Similar to GORG0. A baby reptilian monster is captured and taken to Tokyo for exploitation purposes. It's parents get extremely agitated at this and come after him and slomp Tokyo flat. Letterboxed in the scope format. From 16mm. \$169

**WHEN WOMEN LOST THEIR TAILS** (1971) Serda Berger, Frank Wolff. The sequel to WHEN WOMEN HAD TAILS is another cautionary fantasy comedy featuring the scantly clad Ms. Berger. Story concerns rival cave tribes that begin their incompetent preparations for war. From 35mm. \$170

**INFRA MAN** (1975) Li Hsu-Hsein, Wang Hsein, Terry Liu, Y. Nan-Tzu. Possibly the most action packed sci-fi film ever made. Our little hero battles to save the earth from hordes of horrible monsters. Great fun. Letterboxed in the scope format. From 35mm. \$171

**PLANET OF THE DINOSAURS** (1978) James Whitworth, Pamela Bellaro, Harvey Shane. A sp. spaceship lands on a distant planet. There the crew finds themselves menaced by many prehistoric dinosaurs. Excellent stop motion animation. From 16mm. \$172

### HORROR

**THE BAT WHISPERS** (1935) Chester Morris, Una Merkel, Chance Ward, Richard Tucker. One of the great early, sound horror films. People gathered in an old dark house are menaced by a hooded criminal known as 'the Bat'. Hidden somewhere in the mansion is a fortune. The use of miniature is superb. From 16mm. \$190

**THEY DRIVE BY NIGHT** (1958) Emlyn Williams, Ewald 'The Kaiser', Anna Konstam. A man is falsely accused of murder. He and his girl are pursued across the dark, rainy countryside only to find themselves in the creepy house of a mad killer who plans to murder them. A must see for 1930s horror fans. PLEASE NOTE: Our video master is somewhat softer than our usual standard, but definitely acceptable, especially considering the film's greatness. \$191

**THE DEAD TALK BACK** (1957) Aldo Farnese, Scott Douglas, Laura Brock. A previously unleased horror film! A scientist creates an apparatus that communicates with the dead! He attempts to contact a murdered girl so she can finger her killer. Pure insanity. Ed Wood would've worshipped this. From 35mm. \$192

**TRAUMA** (1962) Lorie Richards, Lynn Bari, John Conte. A gripping psychological horror film about a young girl who suffers from amnesia after witnessing a grisly murder in a swimming pool. She returns to the forbidding, gothic mansion where it happened to discover the truth. Very well done. From 16mm. \$194

## BLOOD and BLACK LACE

EXTRAORDINARILY FULFILLING  
TECHNICOLOR

A fashion house of glamorous models becomes a terror house of blood!

**TALES OF FRANKENSTEIN/THE PROFESSOR** (1958) Ailton Defring, Don Megowan, Helen Westcott, Ludwig Stossel. **TALES OF FRANKENSTEIN** marks the marriage between Universal and Hammer. Defring is Baron Frankenstein, who creates a misshapen monster (played by Megowan in Karloffian make-up). Terrific, old style lab scenes and creepy graveyard settings. We've also added on, **THE PROFESSOR** (1958) starring Doug Hobart as a rampaging workman. In-between is a ten minute drive-in intermission. It's a knockout. From 16mm and 35mm. \$193

**BLOOD AND BLACK LACE** (1966) Cameron Mitchell, Eva Bartok, Thomas Palmer. One of Mario Bava's best. Beautiful models in a luxurious fashion salon are being headshy slain by a masked killer wearing a glove with metal claws. A superb atmosphere filled with horror and dread. From a technicolor 16mm. print. \$195

**THE NIGHT EVELYN CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE** (1971) Anthony Steffen, Giacomo Rossi-Bianchi, Erka Blanc. A psychotic playboy turns prostitute into his torture dungeon to satisfy his sadistic cravings. He's haunted by the corpse of his dead wife. An 'R' rated cult, Italian horror film. From 35mm. \$196

**SCHOOL THAT COULDN'T SCREAM** (1973) Fabio Testi, Karin Basl, Joahim Fuchsberger. A teacher from a girls school is having a fling in a boat with one of his students when they see a knife killing on the shore. Other grisly murders follow in this Italian horror thriller. Letterboxed. From 35mm. \$197

### SWORD AND SANDAL

**SAMSON AND THE SEA BEAST** (1960) Kirk Morris, Margaret Lee. Samson finds himself at odds with a vicious band of pirates. He's taken prisoner, but is later freed by a noblewoman who later loses death in a crocodile pit. Color. From 16mm. \$568

**HEAD OF A TYRANT** (1960) Massimo Grotti, Isabelle Corey, Renato Baldini. A beautiful girl gives herself to a cruel tyrant who has conquered her city. She plans to gain his affection, then murder him. A long unseen gem. Color and scope. From 16mm. \$569

**COLOSSUS AND THE HEADHUNTERS** (1960) Kirk Morris, Laura Brown. The mighty Colossus flees to an island after escaping a deadly earthquake. There, he finds himself battling a ferocious tribe of headhunters as he tries to save a dethroned queen. One of Morris' better sword & sandal efforts. Color. 16mm. \$570

**LAST OF THE VIKINGS** (1961) Cameron Mitchell, Edmund Purdom, Isabelle Cory. Two Viking brothers oppose an evil warlord who's proclaimed himself king of Norway. The warlord is destroyed but only one of the brothers survive. Color. From 16mm. \$571

## HEAD OF A TYRANT

TOTAL SCOOP  
TECHNICOLOR

**DUEL OF CHAMPIONS** (1961) Alan Ladd, Jacques Sernas, France Bellois, Robert Keith. A Roman general is captured by the marauding Albans and his troops slaughtered. He escapes and returns to Rome only to find disgrace. Color. From 16mm. \$572

### RAY DENNIS'S KILLER

Please note. All films in this section come with beautiful color packaging in a sturdy amory box

**THE INCREDIBLY STRANGE CREATURES WHO STOPPED LIVING AND BECAME MIXED UP ZOMBIES** (1964) Cash Flagg, Carolyn Brandt, Brett O'Hara. Ray (aka Cash) plays a freeleader who visits an eerie showshow. He's hypnotized and turned into a murdering zombie. Hidden away in cages are other 'zombie' hypnosis victims who escape at the film's climax. From 35mm. \$301

**THE THRILL KILLERS** (1955 aka **THE MANIACS ARE LOOSE**) Cash Flagg, Brick Barde, Herb Robins, Liz Renay, Carolyn Brandt. Probably Ray's best movie. The riveting story of a psycho killer, his loonytunes brother, and two ax-wielding buddies who've recently escaped from the looney bin. An actor and his wife are caught in the middle of their bloodthirsty insanity. From 35mm. \$302

**THE LEMON GROVE KIDS** (1966 aka **LEMON GROVE KIDS MEET THE MONSTERS**) Cash Flagg, Mike Cannon, Carolyn Brandt, Coleman Francis. Experience some of the wackiest humor ever as Ray and his buddies do their amazing relations of the Boney Boys while battling aliens and monsters. Ray's imitation of Huntz Hall is virtually perfect. From 16mm. \$303





**RAT PINK AND BOO BOO** (1968) Van Saxon, Carolyn Brandt, Thelma Houston. Carolyn plays the girlfriend of a rock singer. When she's kidnapped by thugs, the little characters swing into action. Almost dreamlike in its moodswings. Original title was **RAT PINK AND BOO BOO**. But he little at the lab blew it. From 35mm. RS54

**BLOOD SHACK** (1971) aka **THE CHOOCHER** Carolyn Brandt, Ron Hancock, Jason Wayne. A creepy film about an actress who inherits a ranch with a haunted shack. A hooded sword-wielding devil god is believed to have committed many slayings there, including the recent murder of a young girl. From 16mm. RS55

**BLOOD SHACK** (1971) aka **THE CHOOCHER** DIRECTORS CUT This film originally had a running time was unacceptable to distributors, so Ray peddled it out to over 70 minutes. In this new edition, Ray has carefully stripped out the padding and reconstructed the film to its intended running time. The result is a better paced and highly atmospheric. It also boasts a new music score. Specify, **DIRECTORS CUT**. From 35mm. RS56

**BOOY FEVER** (1970) aka **THE LAST ORIGINAL 'B' MOVIE** aka **SUPER COOL** Ray Dennis Steckler, Carolyn Brandt, Bernard Fein. The ruthless leader of a dope ring is after the woman who ripped him off. It's up to a clever private eye to find her before the drug boss does. Interesting, exciting, and witty. From 16mm. RS57

**THE HOLLYWOOD STRANGER MEETS THE SKIDROW SLASHER** (1978) Pierre Agostino, Carolyn Brandt. Two menaces are on the loose. One slashes the throats of alcoholic men, the other strangles cell girls. The two are strangely attracted and this leads to a bloody climax. Deliriously rated 'R'. From 35mm. RS58

**LAS VEGAS SERIAL KILLER** (1985) Pierre Agostino, Ron Jason, Kathryn Downy. Based in part on a true story, this film is about a sadistic killer of young show girls and prostitutes. Rated 'R' for nudity and violence. From 35mm. RS59



## EXPLOITATION

**YOUTH AFLAME** (1959) Joy News, Warren Burr, Ray Moley. The tale of two sisters. One good, one bad. The bad one seeks thrills and excitement, the good one tries to set her straight. Gee, what an original picture. Great camp. Rereleased in 1959 as **HOODLUM GIRLS**. From 35mm. M075

**VIOLATED** (1954) Lili Dawn, Vicki Carlson, William Marlin, Jason News. Police are baffled by a series of hair-raising murders in which the killer slays his victims and then gives them a haircut. The suspects are a paunchy old man with a thing for young girls, and a sleazy photographer. Unbelievable. From 35mm. M076

**FRIGID WIFE** (1967) Jennie Reiter, Sid Noel, Robert Clarke, Reed Huxley. A really horny, enjoyable exploitation film about a frigid wife who goes to her husband for help. He tries to straighten her out by telling her of another couple who had the same problem. They don't make em' like this anymore. From 35mm. M077

**SUBURBAN NOUVELETTE** (1967) Bill Kovin, directed by Herschel Gordon Lewis. The kind tale of sexually frustrated housewives and husbands in suburbia and what they do to relieve these frustrations. Not as risqué as some of Lewis' other films, but very suggestive and most enjoyable in its own low budget way. From 35mm. M078

## JUVENILE SCHLOCK

**DEVIL ON WHEELS** (1947) Norman Nash, Darryl Hickman, Jan Ford, James Cardwell. A man and his family have a lonesome border in their new car with a terrific jagged. Soon after the men see get involved in drug racing, which leads to longer results. One of the first J.D. movies to deal with hot rods. A PFC film. From 16mm. JS50

**THE CURFEW BREAKERS** (1957) Regis Toomey, Paul Kelly, Cathy Downs, Marilyn Madison. A gas station attendant is murdered by a crazed, teenage drug addict. This prompts community leaders to look into the problem of teenage drug traffic. An imitation Elvis is also featured. From 35mm. JS51

**DANCEPOUS YOUTH** (1958) Frankie Vaughan, Carol Leslie, George Baker. British teen idol Vaughan stars as a tough, Liverpool gang member who becomes a rock and roll star and then finds himself in the army. An interesting premise, considering Elvis had just been drafted. From 16mm. JS52

**LOST, LOVELY AND VICIOUS** (1959) Ken Clayton, Sandra Giles, Alyan Chauvin, Barbara Wilson. In this rare J.D. movie, Clayton plays a young actor with dreams of stardom. He looks around with a bevy of beautiful babes only to find himself in hot water because of it. From 35mm. JS53

**THE CHECKERED FLAG** (1963) Peggy Vandig, Joe Morrison, Charles Martin, Evelyn King. A wild movie. The wife of an aging, millionaire race car driver takes a young model into helping her dispose of her hubby. Their plan brings horrifying results. The ending of this film is a knockout, and not what you expect. Similar in theme to **FREAKS**. Lots of racing scenes. From 35mm. JS53

## MYSTERY SUSPENSE FILM NOIR

**PLEASE NOTE:** All titles in this section are just \$12.95, plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**NIGHT BIRDS** (1930) Jameson Thomas, Muriel Angelus, Jack Hain. Early British mystery thriller about a master criminal named 'Flash Jack', who heads a gang of top-hatted robbers that rob the wealthy. A detective tracks the activities to a posh night club. M219

**THE KING MURDER CASE** (1932) Conway Tearle, Natalie Moorhead, Don Albrecht, Marceline Day. A vicious young woman becomes involved with blackmail. Murder soon follows in this nifty Chesterfield whodunnit. From 16mm. M220

**PRISON SHADOWS** (1936) Eddie Nugent, Lucille Lund, Joan Barclay, Forrest Taylor. A fighter is convicted of manslaughter for killing his opponent with a punch that landed after the bell had rung. After he's paroled the same thing happens again. A three-timing girlfriend is behind this bizarre murder plot. From 16mm. M221

**SWAMP WOMAN** (1941) Ann Corio, Jack LaRue, Jay Novello, Mary Hall. An escaped convict is pursued into bayou country by the police in this PFC rarity. Ann plays a dancer recently returned to her swamp country origins who becomes involved in the situation. Her 'heal peeling' dance scene is a hot number. A little spiciness the first 10-5 minutes. From 16mm. M222

**TRIPLE DECEPTION** (1956) Michael Craig, Brenda de Brunsze, Julie Annell. The setting is Paris. A daring impostor is thrust to a multi-million dollar jewelry ring. An exciting British mystery shot on location. From 16mm. M223

**STARK FEAR** (1962) Beverly Garland, Skip Homeier, Kenneth Tobey. The sadistic tale of a man who mentally tortures his wife and eventually plans to murder her. The rape scene involving Garland is most disturbing. Not a 'happy' film by any standards, but well acted by its three principle players. From 16mm. M224

**EVERY MAN IS MY ENEMY** (1970) Robert Webber, Elsa Martinelli. This is a gripping well made crime thriller about an international gang that tries to pull off a jewel robbery. When it fails, the American member of the gang attempts to find out who the traitor was in the gang. Color. From 16mm. M225

**DIARY OF AN EROTIC MURDERESS** (1975) aka **DIARY OF A MURDERESS** Marisa Mell, Richard Conte, Anthony Steffen. Almost a horror film. A femme fatale worms her way into the mansion of a millionaire played by Conte. After disposing of him, she goes after his son. An interesting Italian, gothic thriller with a twisted, sardonic ending. From a gorgeous 35mm print. M226

## SPYS, ESPIONAGE, AND INTRIGUE

**GUERRILLA GIRL** (1953) Helmut Dantine, Marianna. This well paced espionage thriller is centered in Greece during WW2. A wildcat gypsy girl looks for a Nazi intelligence. Originally released by United Artists. From 35mm. SP11



**PATTERN FOR PLUNDER** (1962) Keenan Wynn, Max Zeffing, Ronald Howard. A quartet of WWII vets search for a fortune in lost Nazi loot. They arrive at an ancient coastal castle overlooking a beach riddled with quicksand and where the cursed 'Island of Ben Michel' has taken many lives. Mystery and horror elements add to this terrific 'B' thriller. From 35mm. SP12

**KEEP TALKING BABY** (1961) Eddie Constantine, Mariella Lozzi. Eddie's framed for murder and ends up in prison. He escapes and rounds up the organization that put him there. From 16mm. SP13

**TARGET FOR KILLING** (1966) Stewart Granger, Curt Jurgens, Molly Peters, Aida Cadi. A secret agent is sent to Lebanon to prevent a crime syndicate from assassinating a young heathen. Our debonair agent saves the girl and wins her affections as well in this very well made Italian spy thriller. From 16mm. SP14

## JUNGLE THRILLS

**GOV THE KILLER** (1931) Documentary. The first talkie dealing with Cannibals. Savage marital rights, native sexual behavior, and sacrificial ceremonies are just some of the light topics covered in this obscure jungle documentary. From 16mm. J045

**FORGOTTEN JUNGLE** (1950) Don Harker, Forrest Taylor, Aylce Lewis. A big game hunter is hired to track down a missing boy who's grown up wild in the jungle. He befriends the young, jungle boy and prevents him from being taken into captivity. Has a real schlocky, b&w 'B' movie feel to it. Fun. From 16mm. J046

**TARZANA, THE WILD GIRL** (1972) Ken Clark, Fran Poles. A paleo crashes in the jungles of Africa. Years later, an expedition finds a girl who may have survived the crash. She's beautiful, scantily dressed, and living wild in the jungle. Similar to **JANE JUNGLE GODDESS**. Rated 'R'. From 35mm. J047

**WANG WANG** (1963) aka **KARAMOJAI** One of the strangest jungle documentaries ever filmed. They live on blood and beer' the ads claimed. An inside look at many of the strange customs of an African native tribe. Filmed by an American dentist on safari. Rated 'R' upon rerelease. J048

## FORGOTTEN HORRORS

**PLEASE NOTE:** All titles in this section are just \$12.95, plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

**TANGLED DESTINIES** (1932) Vera Reynolds, Glenn Tryon, Lloyd Whitlock, Dots Hill. An old dark house thriller. An alpine makes a forced landing in the desert. After traveling through a dense fog, the passengers come to a deserted house. Shortly after they enter, the lights go out and a shot rings out! From 16mm. FH45



**GREEN EYES** (1934) Shirley Grey, Charles Starrett, Dorothy Fawcett. A costume party at a large country mansion turns to horror when the guests find their host stabbed to death in a closet. A guest and the police try to solve the mystery. From 16mm. FH46

**CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE** (1935) Chick Chandler, Shirley Grey, Dorothy Fawcett, Claude King. A reporter sets out to prove the invalidity of circumstantial evidence by staging a 'fake' murder and along the way for it. Unfortunately, the 'fake' murder victim proves to be really dead! From 16mm. FH48

**KELLY OF THE SECRET SERVICE** (1936) Joyd Hughes, Sheila Marne, Forrest Taylor. A tear gas grenade is thrown into a laboratory and a radio controlled bomb apparatus is stolen. An agent is called in to solve the case which leads him to a creepy mansion honeycombed with secret passageways. From 16mm. FH47

## MARTIAL ARTS THRILLS

**THE GODFATHER SQUAD** (1973) Bruce Liang, Shirley Corrigan. Drug traffickers hire a Italian family to murder Interpol agents. They're thwarted by a Kung Fu movie star. They offer him a pair in a new movie so they can kill him to his death. From 16mm. FK01

**STORY OF THE DRAGON MASTERS** (1973) Angela Mao, Linson Lee, Carter Hsu, Henry Kazzano. Korean underground leaders use their martial arts skills against government sponsored street gangs and the police. The niece of a catholic priest becomes involved in the activities. From 16mm. FK02

**MASTER OF THE FLYING GUILLOTINE** (1975) Jimmy Wang Yu, Kun Kong, Ling Kun Yee. In 1732 a one armed rebel of the former Ming Dynasty kills two despots of a blind martial arts master. The sightless one sets out for revenge armed with an incredible weapon that's buried through the air upon its victims heads, thus incapacitating them. Non stop action. Scope and 35mm. FK03

**NINJA, GRAND MASTERS OF DEATH** (1975) Chen Young, Yang Chin, Kurale Bruce Jeth. A cell girl is murdered. Suspicion falls on a sleazy oriental businessman. Then it's discovered the girl was killed by a secret Ninja poison used only by a renegade Ninja sect. Incredible action! Scope and color. From 35mm. FK04

**SUPERMANCHU** (1977) Chang Yi, Tien M, Pai Ying. A gang of Chinese thugs enters a small inn. They kill the owners and rape their daughter. The owners son, a Kung Fu expert, sets out to claim revenge for his dead family. Rated 'R'. Scope and 35mm. FK05

## SPAGHETTI AND EURO WESTERNS

**MASSACRE AT MARBLE CITY** (1964) Mario Adorf, Brad Harris, Horst Frank, Dorothy Fawcett. During the gold rush, a rancher is killed by bandits disguised as Indians. The son of the murdered man gets the local sheriff and the Indians to help track down the murderers. A sprawling, well done spaghetti western. V008



**GUNMEN OF RIO GRANDE** (1964) Guy Madison, Fernando Sancho, Madeleine Lebeau, Garard Tichy. Trouble breaks out in a Mexican mining town just south of the Rio Grande. Wyatt Earp is summoned to help clear up this lawlessness. From 16mm. W009

**DJANGO SHOOTS FIRST** (1968) Glenn Saxon, Evelyn Stewart, Fernando Sancho. Django inherits much of the property in a small western town after his father is murdered. Plenty of gunfights and fast fights as Django tracks down the killer. From 16mm. W010

**IT CAN BE DONE AMIGO** (1971) Bud Spencer, Jack Palance, Renato Castellani, Dany Bavel. A western casanova seduces the sister of a tough gunfighter. The gunfighter gets wind of it and comes after him. Look out! There's a nice touch of wit attached to the proceedings. W011

## MEXICAN HORROR/SCI-FI

**PLEASE NOTE:** The following titles are available in Spanish only with no subtitles.



**THE ASTRONAUTS** (1959) aka **LOS COSMONAUTAS** Cleliazo, Ada Luba Paulito, Andres Solar. A male-female astronaut team journey into outer space. Their target is the moon in this Mexican sci-fi comedy adventure. In Spanish only. From 35mm. M010

**THE HOUSE OF TERROR** (1956) aka **LA CASA DEL TERROR** Lon Chaney, Jr., Tito Tan, Yolanda Vazquez. A mad scientist robs graves for his resurrection experiments. One of them happens to be a mummy that when brought back to life turns into a werewolf (Lon). Released here as **FACE OF THE SCREAMING WEREWOLF** in Spanish only. From 35mm. M002

**THE BLACK PIT OF DR. M** (1968) aka **MISTERIO DE ULTRATUMBA** Gesion Santos, Rafael Beland. A mad doctor is executed for murder. He comes back from the dead in a horribly disguised body and seeks to murder his ex-colleagues daughter. A fine Mexican horror film. In Spanish only. From 35mm. M003

**CASTLE OF THE MONSTERS** (1957) aka **CASTILLO DE LOS MONSTRUOS** Cleliazo, German Flores, Evangelina Elizondo. A Mexican version of A. & C. MEET FRANKENSTEIN. A newswoman couple spends the night in a castle where they encounter Frankenstein, Dracula, the Wolfman, the Mummy, even the Creature from the Black Lagoon. In Spanish only. From 35mm. M004



# the NEWS HOUND

The Hound welcomes you to the start of a fourth year of mystery and fear at his newsstand beside the creepy cobblestones of *Scarlet Street*.

Sequels, prequels, and remakes dominate the drawing boards of Hollywood: **THE VAN HELSING CHRONICLES** will be Francis Coppola's follow-up to his stylish **DRÁCULA** of A.D. 1992. Once again, Anthony Hopkins stars as the Victorian vampire hunter, who this time "will combat Satanic forces from Hong Kong to San Francisco". Reportedly miffed at his noninvolvement in the sequel is Count Gary Oldman. After all, dying at the end of a *Dracula* movie never stopped Christopher Lee...Darth Vader and the Skywalker clan are also making return appearances, as George Lucas begins another cycle of three **STAR WARS** epics—prequels to the first trio—to be produced over the next four years. Lucas will also bring back Indiana Jones for another adventure starring Harrison Ford, again to be directed by Steven Spielberg. ...20th Century Fox is planning yet another big-budget excursion to the **PLANET OF THE APES**. ... Other planned sequels include **DARKMAN 2** for Universal, **BEETLEJUICE 2** for Geffen, and **BATMAN 3** (minus director Tim Burton) for Warner Bros. The new *Batchapter* rolls in next September, with Robin Williams joining the cast as The Riddler. A Summer 1995 release is scheduled.

**THE MUMMY** lumbers to life once again at Universal, in an updated version of the Karloff 1932 classic. Joe Dante (*MATINEE*) will direct from a screenplay by John Sayles and Alan Ormsby....The next project for writer/director Chris Columbus (*MRS. DOUBTFIRE*) will likely be a remake of Vincent Price's **THEATRE OF BLOOD** for MGM.... Sean Connery and Julia Roberts are the rumored stars of a new version of **THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR** for 20th Century Fox. Meanwhile, Roberts will be star-

ring as **MARY REILLY**, Dr. Jekyll's palpitating chambermaid, in a Tri-Star production, which will begin shooting in May.

Suave crimefighters John Steed and Emma Peel return in a feature version of the swinging 60s series **THE AVEN-**



Robert Clarke had a hot time in the ol' town as **THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON** back in 1959.

**TERS** from Warner Bros. and Weintraub Productions. Other classic British TV shows due for big screen treatment: **THUNDERBIRDS**, **THE PRISONER**, and **DANGERMAN** (a.k.a. **SECRET AGENT**).... Vamp-in-training Christina Ricci, capturing hearts (literally) as Wednesday in the **ADDAMS FAMILY** films, finally gets a leading man in her next movie—and, fittingly, he's a dead one. She'll costar with a computer-generated version of Harvey Comics' friendly ghost, **CASPER**. The new Paramount picture starts shooting early this year under the direction of Alex Proyas, whose last ill-

fated project, **THE CROW**, starring the late Brandon Lee, will probably be released this year.

Robert Clarke and Michael Godell, coconspirators in the proposed sequel to that hot, hot, hot flick of the 1950s, **THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON**, have renamed their planned flaming follow-up **THE HIDEOUS SHE-DEMON**. Talk about a hunka hunka burnin' love!

Two heroes of the radio waves are poised to leap onto the silver screen, courtesy of Universal: **THE GREEN HORNET** will buzz in a story penned by **HARD TARGET**'s Chuck Pfarrer. And **THE SHADOW** will be a high-profile summer release with Alec Baldwin in the title role. Helping to cloud men's minds is Penelope Ann Miller as Lamont Cranston's main squeeze, Margo Lane. Russell Mulcahy (**HIGHLANDER**) directs.

Old-time radio days serve as the backdrop for the new Lucas comedy/mystery **RADIOLAND MURDERS**, now in production from Universal. Other features currently rolling: **MESMER**, starring Alan Rickman (**PRINCE OF THIEVES**' Sheriff of Nottingham) as the 19th-century master of hypnosis; **MURDER IN THE FIRST** starring Christian Slater; John Carpenter's **IN THE MOUTH OF MADNESS**; Patrick Stewart—Captain Picard himself—as the equally-bald Daddy Warbucks in **ANNIE AND THE CASTLE OF TERROR**; and New World's **TO CATCH A YETI** starring Meat Loaf (no, he doesn't play the title role).

Clive Barker's children's book *The Thief of Always* is being produced as a \$20 million animated feature by Paramount. Fellow author Anne Rice has two of her works currently before the cameras. **EXIT TO EDEN**, a humorously sexy novel written under her nonhorror *nom de plume*, Anne Rampling, stars Dana Delany, Dan Aykroyd, and Rosie O'Donnell. **INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE** has

*Continued on page 20*





## Batman Hits the Big Time

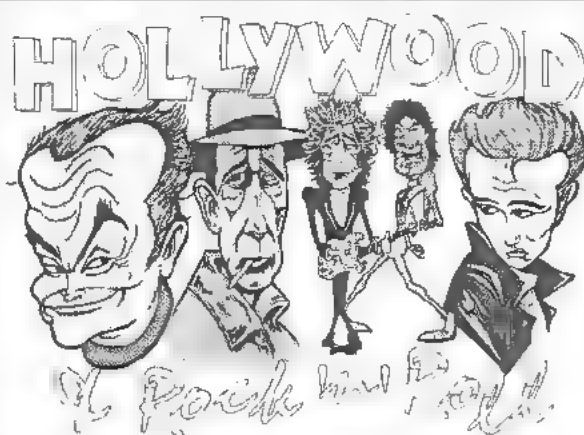
Although it's been on the air just over a year, the smash success of **BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES** has already spawned a theatrical film. **BATMAN: MASK OF THE PHANTASM** opens Christmas Day with an all new, expanded story line featuring the Caped Crusader. The same creative team responsible for the hit TV show—producers Bruce Timm, Eric Radomski, and Alan Burnett—are also behind the full length film, which will strive to show the Dark Knight in a different light. (Neat trick; you hardly ever see Bats hanging 'round in the daytime.)

"I was very interested in doing a Bruce Wayne love story," says Alan Burnett. "We had not touched on Batman's personal life in our TV series, and we hadn't given him a romance other than Catwoman. I wanted to help his fans understand the darkness that is so much a part of Batman." In **MASK OF THE PHANTASM**, millionaire Bruce Wayne encounters Andrea Beaumont (voiced by Dana Delany, late of **CHINA BEACH**), an old flame who had inexplicably vanished, shattering their plans for marriage. This story is set against a mystery in which aging gangsters are being murdered. All of the victims were loyal to mob kingpin Salvatore Valestra (voiced by Abe Vigoda, Fish of **BARNEY MILLER**).

Familiar voices from the TV series include Kevin Conroy as Batman; Mark Hamill as The Joker, Bob Hastings as Commissioner Gordon, and Efram Zimbalist, Jr., as Alfred the butler. Boy Wonder Robin (Loren Lester) is not involved. Series writers Paul Dini, Martin Pasko, and Michael Reeves crafted the script.

—Sean Farrell

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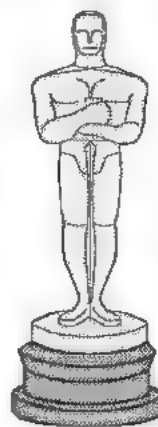
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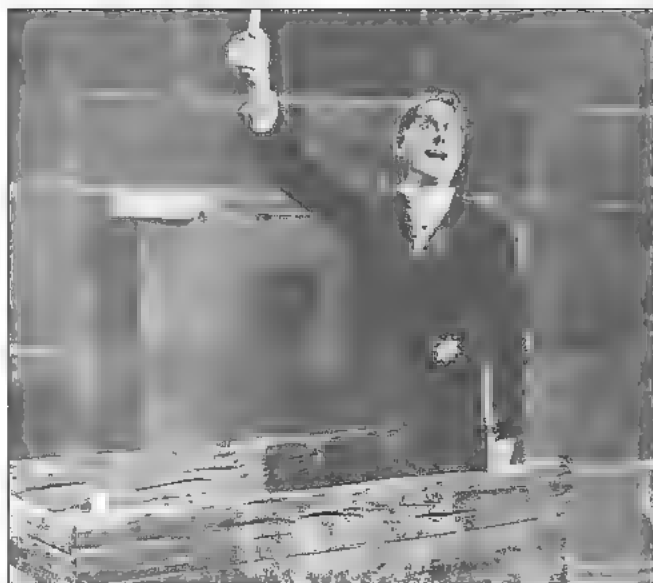
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# ZACHERLEY VISITS

## HELL!

*A dinner was served for three at Dracula's house by the sea.*

So began John Zacherle's musical career, growling a lyric inspired by his WCAU-TV SHOCK THEATER program in Philadelphia. At the start of every show, "Roland" (as he was known in Philly) entered to the accompaniment of a macabre lyric, usually read by the staff announcer. Shortly thereafter, the idea was expanded into a full-fledged rock 'n' roll song called "Dinner With Drac", which became an instant smash in 1958. The tune earned him the title "Cool Ghoul", an appellation attributed to Dick Clark, on whose shows Zach made regular guest appearances. A follow-up, "82 Tombstones", was quickly prepared, but failed to generate significant interest and just as quickly disappeared. Undaunted, record companies still sought out Zach, and the result was a trio of LPs recorded between 1959 and 1963. The first, "Spook Along with Zacherley", was released in 1960 on the Electra label and bore such classics as "Come with Me to Transylvania" and "A Wicked Thought Will Pull You Through". Since the album was released during the famous Nixon/Kennedy campaign, it ended with the five and a-half minute "Zacherley for President". Next came "Monster Mash" (1962), a Cameo-Parkway release, which not only covered the Bobby "Boris" Pickett hit of that year, but also parodied other hit singles owned by the same label, such as "Hully Gully Baby" ("Hurry Bury Baby") and "The Girl from Wolverton Mountain" ("Ghoul from Wolverton Mountain"). Following quickly came "Scary Tales", featuring a song often used on Zacherley's later television shows, "Happy Halloween". More recently, Zach could be heard on his WCBS-FM Halloween specials singing "I'm Overdrawn at the Blood Bank (Can I Put the Bite on You?)", "Zach is Back", and "Grave Robbing Tonight".



The latter two were released on cassette and available only through mail order.

The latest from the Cool Ghoul arrived earlier this year: "Eternal Polyester". The lyrics are hilarious, with Zach descending a stairway to Hell only to find everybody dressed in leisure suits! As the Disco Horror reaches its heights, all of the damned souls are "dancing with the Devil in his polyester pants". A must for fans, sung by Zach with his usual jocularly, it is great to hear him sounding as spirited as ever. Side Two contains "Formaldehyde", a bouncy confession of Zach's addiction to the stuff (in character only!) The lyrics at one point pass the limits of his usual good taste, as Zach admits, "I could drink until I vomit. Come to think of it—I usually do! Oh, my dear, I beg your pardon. Did I hurl a nasty chunk on you?"—sort of Zacherley meets Wayne's World. The songs, also on cassette and obtainable by mail, were penned by Michael Gilks, who can be contacted at P.O. Box 520, E. Quogue, NY 11942. You might want to look into the latest from the one and only, original TV Ghoul.

—Richard Scrivani

### NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 18*

been plagued by (a) author Rice's very vocal criticisms, (b) rumors of star Tom Cruise's reluctance to portray the Vampire Lestat's pansexuality, and (c) the sudden death of costar River Phoenix. Nevertheless, the film is still on track and, at press time, Christian Slater is a top contender to replace Phoenix in the role of the interviewer. Phoenix's final feature, the desert thriller DARK BLOOD, will be released later this year.

Forrest J Ackerman, editor of *Famous Monsters* and friend of *Scarlet Street*, has stepped before the cameras for a costarring role in CEREMONY, a Hickok-Castro Production directed by Joe Castro. The story of an evil angel trapped for centuries in a clockwork prison, CEREMONY chronicles the ter-

rifying events on the night the She-Demon (what, another She-Demon?) attempts to break free. Emilie Talbot stars as the Ackermonger's daughter. Let's hope "Mr. Science Fiction" has a sizeable role in this, his 44th film; in several of his hoarier screen vehicles, you can't see the Forry for the wheeze.

More unnerving news of movies in their embryonic stage. . . Robots rule after a worldwide ecological holocaust in Stanley Kubrick's A.I. (for Artificial Intelligence). It's the director's first big SF epic since 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. . . THE EXORCIST's terrifying team of William Peter Blatty and William Friedkin are again joining forces for the supernatural thriller ELSEWHERE. . . Shades of HOUSE OF DRACULA: Jason, Leatherface, and Freddy Kruger may team up in an all-scar New Line Cinema fea-

ture. . . Shades of Hitchcock's ROPE: The plot of director John Badham's new suspenseur NICK OF TIME unfolds in a continuous two hours of reel time. . . The ghoulish graphics of Gahan Wilson will metamorphose into an animated feature from Steven Spielberg's Amblin Productions, with Nicholas Meyer as executive producer. . . Sherlock Holmes as a villainous heroin addict? Brian Koppelman's very revisionist screenplay, ELEMENTARY, has been purchased by Quincy Jones Productions for future filming. . . NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS collaborators Henry Selick and Tim Burton are conspiring to return with an even more bizarre project, GEEK LOVE.

Stalking toward the small screen in May is the eight-hour ABC miniseries

*Continued on page 22*



## Conrad Brooks on the Set of

# ED WOOD

Interview by Jessie Lilley

When *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE*, the "worst movie ever made", was made, Conrad Brooks was there. Thirty-seven years later, Conrad was also there when director Tim Burton brought the director of that much-loved, notorious movie back to life (in the person of Johnny Depp) for the most unexpected of biopics: *ED WOOD*. In an exclusive chat with *Scarlet Street*, Conrad tells us the truth about . . . Grave Robbers from Outer Space!

*Scarlet Street:* Well, tell us about your day on the set of *ED WOOD*

**Conrad Brooks:** Okay! Well, actually, it was too damned short! (Laughs) I was having a wonderful time. Everyone was really nice on the set. They really treated me like I was somebody.

*SS:* And well they should. What's your scene about?

**CB:** Well, actually, I don't play myself. There's an actor in the film playing Conrad Brooks. He's actually present throughout the whole film. That was the biggest surprise.

*SS:* You play a bartender, don't you?

**CB:** Yeah, I play a bartender in the film. The scene is between Johnny Depp and myself. He's sitting in a bar by himself, and if I'm not mistaken, it's shortly after he hears about Lugosi dying. It's a one-liner for me; I just ask him if there is anything else I can do for him. He puts his hands in his pockets and he finds a little change there and he just leaves it on the bar—and that's it.

*SS:* What was your impression of Johnny Depp?

**CB:** Well, I met Johnny in New York, and he's a person. He's a wonderful man.

*SS:* And a good actor, too.

**CB:** Well, I mean, I'm checking his films out now! (Laughs) I don't bother much going to films anymore. There's no more Lugosi around, no Karloff, or all those pictures I grew up with . . .

*SS:* Ed Wood was a cross-dresser. Is Johnny in drag for your scene?

**CB:** No, no, no, no—he's a very sharp, well-dressed man. Which Ed normally was, you know?

*SS:* What about Tim Burton? What is your impression of him as a director?

**CB:** Well, like I said, it was quick. There was no rehearsal. We did the scene and he wanted to go with it. I think we did it three times.

*SS:* Martin Landau plays Bela Lugosi in the film. Did you meet?

**CB:** Oh, no. The only person I met on the set was Johnny. Very friendly fella. Very friendly man. A great guy.

*SS:* So now you've worked with Tim Burton and Ed Wood. Who would you rather have direct you?

**CB:** I gotta pick Ed Wood!

*SS:* Really?

**CB:** After all, listen! Ed did promise to put me in a movie! It took him four long years to do it, but he finally made the film! He kept his promise! Put me in his movies!

*SS:* He did, indeed.

**CB:** Okay, it came to be considered one of the worst pictures of all time . . .

*SS:* What was it like on the set with Edward D. Wood, Jr.?

**CB:** Working as an actor, I thought, "Gee, this is an experience for me. It's a great experience!" I have no regrets and I'm glad it all happened; things

worked out real nice for me. I got to do at least 99 bad motion pictures. *CURSE OF THE QUEER WOLF*, *GLEN OR GLENDA*, *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* . . . what else did I do? I got a chance to do some good films, too! *A POLISH VAMPIRE IN BURBANK*, and *MISFIT PATROL*, in which I played Officer Murphy, and, of course, *ED WOOD* . . .

*SS:* Don't forget that one!

**CB:** Those are my best movies—you know, versus the 99 other ones! (Laughs) You get to meet a lot of nice people, and that's the important thing. It's not always the money, it's who you meet in the game.

*SS:* Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your day on the set of *ED WOOD*?

**CB:** The fella who's playing me shocked me! His name is Brent Hinkley; he's a very nice person and he's a professional actor. I knew eventually all this stuff about Ed Wood would come to a head, you know what I mean?



Conrad Brooks and Johnny Depp

SS: Yes.

CB: But, really, what shocked me the most was when I realized that I was in the story! I mean, me! Conrad Brooks! You know what I mean? I tried to make it in Hollywood; hopefully, we tried to make it, and here I'm in the story of Ed Wood. And that's a shocker to me.

SS: Did the actor who's playing you talk to you about you?

CB: He met an actor friend of mine on the set the other day, and he wanted to know a bit about me. The guy said, "Well, I didn't know Conrad 40 years ago, but I know him pretty well now. He's a pretty nice guy. But I don't know exactly what he was like 40 years ago."

SS: Right.

CB: But anyway, I'm always the same guy! (Laughs)

SS: Well, Conrad we look forward to seeing you in ED WOOD.

CB: It's a quick scene, sweetheart. And at this stage of the game, it's too late to change.



Let's play dress-up! Edward D. Wood, Jr., kneels before his friend and costar, Bela Lugosi, in a stirring scene from 1953's GLEN OR GLENDA.



Veronica Carlson

#### NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 20

THE STAND, adapted by author Stephen King from his own novel and starring Molly Ringwald and Rob Lowe. Also due this spring is a CBS drama special, THE TWILIGHT ZONE: ROD SERLING'S LOST CLASSICS. It features the premiere productions of two recently rediscovered Serling teleplays. In other TV news, the TNT cable network has just begun repeat telecasts of the great 60s West

ern spy spoof THE WILD, WILD WEST (a Mel Gibson feature version may be in the works). . . . Lee Falk's THE PHANTOM is now in production as an animated series, with Scott Valentine and Margot Kidder providing the vocal talent. . . . "Three mail order crustaceans explore the human world" in the new syndicated comedy series AMAZING SEA MONKEYS. Finally, brine shrimp will be performing in sit coms, instead of merely writing them.

Scarlet Street interviewee Veronica Carlson is back before the cameras in the direct-to-video anthology FREAK SHOW. The Hammer Scream Queen stars in a segment called "The Uninvited Guest", which takes place in the 1890s and involves a seance, a mummy, and reincarnation. Directed by Paul Talbot and William Cooke, the sequence is designed as an homage to such Hammer classics as FRANK ENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED and DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE.

Exciting news for laser video collectors: Robert Wise's 1963 ghostly masterpiece THE HAUNTING is at last available, and it's letterboxed to preserve the film's original pulse-pounding Panavision. Other titles newly available on video: THE DARK WIND, starring Lou Diamond Phillips as the Navajo detective of Tony Hillerman's novels, is now on tape from Live Home Video after being shelved by its producer Robert Redford. . . . THE

FIRM, the John Grisham thriller starring Tom Cruise, and PRAYING MANTIS, a made-for-TV suspenser with Jane Seymour, are available from Paramount. . . . Famous French family THE CONEHEADS make a bee-line to home video in late January, as does the steamy police drama JAILBAIT with C. Thomas Howell. . . . Fast-paced horror title BODY PARTS starring Jeff Fahey has been bargain priced at \$19.95. . . . February brings the mystery telefilm RUBDOWN to tape, as well as the latest entry in Charles Band's popular science-fantasy feature series TRANCERS 4—JACK OF SWORDS.

Quick mentions of other mysterious media: J. B. Priestly's play AN INSPECTOR CALLS, currently enjoying a revival on London's West End, will be headed for the Broadway boards in April. . . . Janet Leigh tries her hand at authoring a collection of behind-the-scenes stories about Hitchcock's PSYCHO. Her book will be published by Crown next year.

In addition to those of the irreplaceable Vincent Price, we also lost the talents of veteran Hollywood directors Christian Nyby (THE THING) and Charles Lamont (ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET THE INVISIBLE MAN, among many others).

Drop by The Hound's den next spring for further frightening previews of what's in store in '94.





# UPDATE: INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE OR WHAT BECOMES A LEGEND LEAST?

Last issue we spilled some beans about the controversial casting of Tom Cruise as Lestat in David Geffen's production of *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*. *Scarlet Street* was far from alone in bean proliferation—*ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT*, *HARD COPY*, *The Star*, and *The National Enquirer* were working the same side of the vegetable patch—but we were probably the only publication to take flak over the new feature-film version of *MAVERICK* in the process!

No sooner had *Scarlet Street* #12 hit the stands than something else hit the fan. A source close to the production stated (anonymously and off-the-record, natch) that, privately, he agreed with much of what we'd written—namely, that Cruise was but the latest example of Hollywood miscasting based on box-office clout—but that we had lost all credibility by questioning Mel Gibson's casting as Bret Maverick. (Gibson as Maverick came up by way of example, along with everything Kevin Costner has done in the last four or five years.)

Well, guess what, Anonymous Source? No less an American institution than *TV Guide* agrees with *Scarlet Street*! In a recent "VCR Report" column by that mag's Myles Callum, the following found its way into print:

I'll take a gander at the upcoming big-screen version with Mel Gibson, but in my heart there's only one Maverick, and his name is James Garner.

And that's what Hollywood counts on—that, no matter who they cast, cram, or stuff into whatever unwieldy role, the great popcorn munching public will take a gander. Well, ganders don't come as cheap as they used to—especially when what we get at gander prices is Spam. Surely there's a less costly, more pleasant way to be goosed . . .

And surely there have been less troubled productions than *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*—it's just hard to think of any. Much of the bad news stems from Anne Rice, who cuttngly combined a book tour for *Lasher*, her sequel to *The Witching Hour*, with a steady stream of steamy commentary about the horrors of Hollywood. The Writer Rice was everywhere, and everywhere was heard the word, "Hollywood is destroying my book!"

(Rice isn't the first author to vilify Tinseltown for screwing up her work, though the rumor that Dostoevsky wrote *The Idiot* shortly after selling *Crime and Punishment* to Goldwyn is unsubstantiated.)

Then there's Tom Cruise, *Movieland's* Top Gun. Official word is that Cruise was "accepted" by director Neil Jordan only after the superstar agreed to play Jordan's script as written. Official word was followed almost immediately by countless claims that Cruise, uncomfortable with playing on-camera love scenes with men, had demanded that every scene with homoerotic content be banished from the script. (That's sort of like making *GONE WITH THE WIND* without mentioning the Civil War.)

Cruise, it was further reported, was also concerned that, not only did costar Brad Pitt look far more attractive than he in the dailies, he'd also had the audacity to be taller. (Cheer up, Tom; it never hurt Mickey Rooney all that much. Remember that moving scene in 1948's *WORDS AND MUSIC*, in which Rooney kicked off in front of a store selling elevator shoes . . . ?)

Then there was the eyebrow problem. Hollywood hasn't been home to such a sumptuous pair of brows since Joan Crawford started playing *THE HAIRY APE* at home, but *INTERVIEW* required that Cruise undergo a bleach job to attain Lestat's golden-blond allure. Unfortunately, along with those dark, brooding brows seemed to go most of the star's dark good looks. Certainly Cruise, accepting an Actor of the Decade



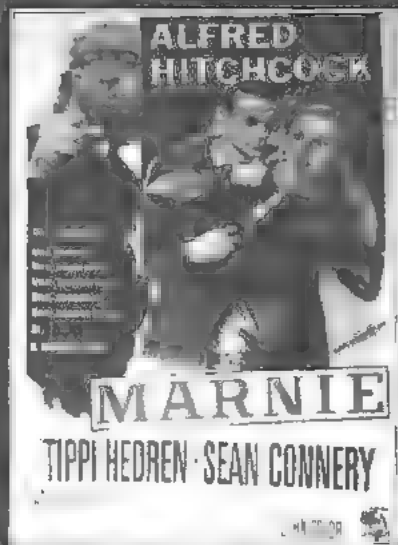
Last November, a photographer snuck onto the set of *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE* and came away with this shot of Tom Cruise looking like something the cat threw out.

award at the Chicago Film Festival last October 15th, looked like hell—gaunt, washed-out, and with a death head's grin even more spooky than Mimi Rogers' in all those *Star* fashion spreads—and that was before Stan Winston had applied the much mentioned makeup magic that was going to transform the 31-year old vamp into the centuries-old vampire.

Then real tragedy struck: On Halloween night, 23-year-old River Phoenix, signed to play the young interviewer to whom Louis (Pitt) tells his tale, died suddenly, senselessly of a lethal combination of Valium, cocaine, and heroin. Stricken outside the Viper Room, a Sunset Boulevard club owned by Johnny Depp, Phoenix was

*Continued on page 88*

# NOW PLAYING...SUSPENSE!



Marnie (1964) Hitchcock, Italian  
28" x 33", linen-backed, \$250.



Lifeboat (1943) Hitchcock, 27" x 41"  
stone lithograph, linen-backed, \$2500.

Champagne (1928) Hitchcock, French  
47" x 63", stone lithograph, linen-backed,  
\$5,200.

Charade (1963) Audrey Hepburn/Cary  
Grant, British 30" x 30", \$125.

Duel (1972) Steven Spielberg, British  
30" x 40", \$125.

Foreign Correspondent (1940) Hitchcock  
11" x 14", \$350.

Gorilla at Large (1954) 3-D, British  
30" x 40", linen-backed, \$300.

Hush... Hush Sweet Charlotte (1965)  
Bette Davis/Robert Aldrich, 14" x 36", \$40

Night Train to Munich (1940) Sir Carol  
Reed, British 30" x 40", stone lithograph  
linen-backed, \$1,100.

Notorious (1946) Hitchcock, Belgian  
14" x 17", linen-backed, \$300.

Psycho (1960) Hitchcock, 11" x 14"  
Perkins walking to house, \$350.

Rebecca (1940) Hitchcock, Belgian  
14" x 22", linen-backed, \$450.

Rope (1948) Hitchcock, 22" x 28", \$350.

Spellbound (1945) Hitchcock, Belgian  
14" x 18", linen backed, \$200.

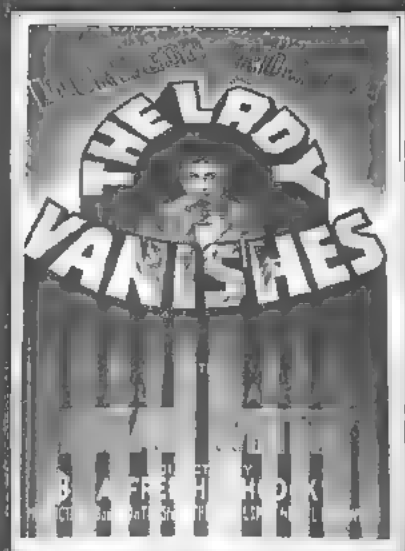
To Catch a Thief (1955) Hitchcock,  
British, 30" x 40", linen backed, \$550

Whatever Happened to Baby Jane? (1962)  
Davis/Crawford/Aldrich, 27" x 41", \$95.

Woman Alone, The (1936/Sabotage)  
Hitchcock, 11" x 14", title card, \$950.

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Dish 22" x 31" stone lithograph, linen-backed, \$5,000.

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# WHAT PRICE GLORY!

by Bruce G. Hallenbeck

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

—Edgar Allan Poe

Vincent Price. The very name conjures up baroque images of Poesque castles on cliffs overlooking the sea, eye-popping 3-D waxworks, and tinglers electrifying audiences. Then there was that voice—"velvet" was the usual description. A man of charm and culture, menace and mirth. If Karloff was the King of Horror, Price was its Crown Prince.

From his genre debut in 1939's *TOWER OF LONDON* to his final, poignant performance in Tim Burton's *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS* (1990), Price firmly entrenched himself in the public consciousness as the quintessential horror-film star. His 50-plus years in the genre produced classics that are a veritable encyclopedia of horror: *THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS* (1940), *HOUSE OF WAX* (1953), *THE MAD MAGICIAN* (1954), *THE FLY* (1958), *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* (1958), *THE TINGLER* (1959). Then there were the delicious Roger Corman films: *FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER* (1960), *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM* (1961), *TALES OF TERROR* (1962), *THE RAVEN* (1963). Corman also directed Price in what are arguably two of his best genre performances, in *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH* (1964) and *THE TOMB OF LIGEIA* (1965).

Price's career in horror seemed to mushroom in the late 60s and early 70s. Perhaps his finest performance of all was as the terrifying Matthew Hopkins in 1968's *WITCH-FINDER GENERAL* (a.k.a. *THE CONQUEROR WORM*), and he achieved continued success in the two Dr. Phibes films and 1973's *THEATRE OF BLOOD*.

A lot of people thought that Price was British, unaware that he hailed from St. Louis, Missouri. Perhaps it was because he was so eloquent and spoke so articulately about art, food, and wine. He seemed to be the product of another time, a bygone era when gentlemen were still in vogue. Of course, Price was far more than a horror star. He made well over 100 films, the best of which he considered to be Otto Preminger's *LAURA* (1944).

There's a bittersweet irony about Price's death. Although he had been ill for years, he died six days before Halloween. To the very end, his timing was impeccable.

Remembrances, now, of what Price glory was all about.

\*\*\*

On the following pages, friends and coworkers of the late Vincent Price share their memories of a man who will forever be enshrined as one of film's greatest horror stars, one of film's most versatile character actors, one of film's finest gentlemen . . .





Not only was he a wonderful actor, he was also a true gentleman.

—Diana Rigg

I have told people ever since I've been in the business—which is a long time—that Vincent was the nicest man I ever met, bar none. I never heard anyone say a bad word about him. He was absolutely charming to people from the highest level down to people who came just to watch the movie, to the crew, to everybody. He was just a genial and amiable gentleman to absolutely everyone, as well as being a marvelously talented actor. That's quite an accomplishment. He was a wonderful performer and a wonderful human being.

—Richard Matheson



Vincent was—outside of the fact that he was extremely intelligent, and very knowledgeable, in the best sense, and an expert in a good many areas, such as cooking and art—he was a truly remarkable man. Let me put it another way. I have a reasonable fondness for actors. Sometimes it's not really quite reasonable, because many of them are like children—but Vincent Price was intelligent, and behaved intelligently, and was remarkable in every respect. Most actors tend to be crybabies when they don't get exactly what they want. That could never be said of Vincent. He was a wonderful man.

—Sam Arkoff

I did two films with him, and he was responsible for breaking me into the art world. He was really my mentor. He guided my life. He was very, very important in my life, because his wonderful appreciation of my work gave me my second career. And he used to say wonderful things! He'd say to me, "Hazel, remember, every Rembrandt was not a Rembrandt. You don't have to worry." And I think that helped me a great deal.

Vincent used to say that Venice was a bottomless pit; he loved to go there because he never learned everything about Venice. Vincent himself was like that, because every time you were with him you learned something. I call him a true American Renaissance man.

—Hazel Court



He was a pleasure to work with and an amusing companion. He was a man of varied interests and was intelligent about all of them. That quality alone made him a rarity in Hollywood.

—Robert Quarry

Vinnie Price was a fine actor, a fine man, and that rarest of all things in the modern world . . . a true gentleman. I only acted with him in one film, *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS* (I strangled him, come to think of it), but that doesn't affect how I felt about him.

—Charlton Heston

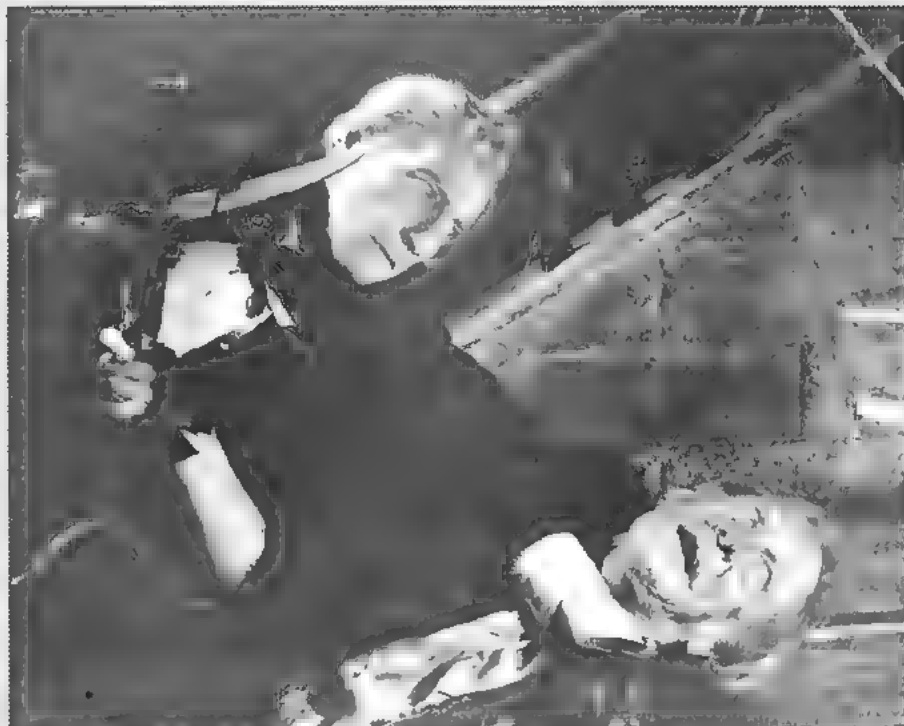


THE MACABRE MASTERPIECE OF TERROR!



When I worked with him on *THE BIG CIRCUS*, he told me many stories about my mom and dad. They had worked together in the early days. A very nice man.

—David Nelson



When I heard that my old and very dear friend Vincent Price had died, I rejoiced for him. He'd suffered painful ill health during the last few years and had been so very lonely since the death of his beloved wife Coral Browne. They are reunited now, after a splendid inning, and Vincent has left behind a rich filmic legacy for future generations to enjoy. God bless him.

—Peter Cushing



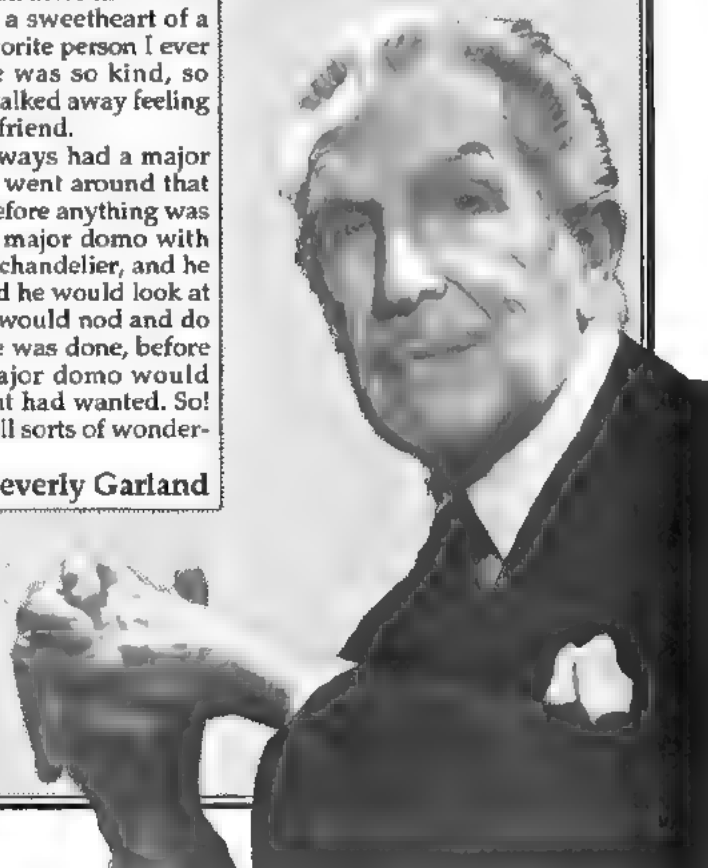
I don't think I've ever met an actor nicer than Vincent Price; he was just a sweetheart of a man. I think he was my favorite person I ever worked with, because he was so kind, so easy, so comfortable. You walked away feeling like he was your very best friend.

I remember that he always had a major domo with him. The story went around that when he went onto a set, before anything was filmed, he would take his major domo with him. He would look at the chandelier, and he would look at the chair, and he would look at the paintings, and then he would nod and do the movie. After the movie was done, before they struck the set, the major domo would take the things that Vincent had wanted. So! His house was filled with all sorts of wonderful things!

—Beverly Garland

Of all the many people I've worked with in 32 years, he most epitomizes what I aspire to; which is to be a kind person, a gentleman, and a true professional.

—Aron Kincaid





I've known Vincent forever, and we acted together in *THE WINSLOW BOY*. He had a lovely, sunny, warm disposition, and I think he was a magnificent actor. I don't think he had a mean bone in his body. When he was on his deathbed, he still could smile and make a witticism. He was really extraordinary when he was dying; I just couldn't get over it. I saw him very close to the end, when he could hardly speak, and he still had this boyish enthusiasm about life. I think he was a very unusual man.

—Jane Wyatt

The world has lost a great actor and I have lost a wonderful friend. When I prepared to do our first film together, *THE OBLONG BOX*, I was nervous and frankly intimidated about meeting Vincent. I had been a fan of his for years, and didn't know what to expect. But his warmth and humor immediately put me at ease, and we became fast friends.

During the years that my wife and I lived in Los Angeles, we were able to see a good deal of Vincent and his wife, Coral Browne, and it was one of the joys of our time there.

Vincent, Peter Cushing, and I share the same birth date. Each birthday would bring a card from Vincent, containing some hilarious inscription, frequently followed by a phone call.

We kept in touch as recently as a few months ago. I knew his health was failing, and that he missed Coral, who died two years ago. I know he is happy, now.

Vincent has left a marvelous cinematic legacy, films we can enjoy over and over again—and, for some of us, some cherished personal memories as well.

I miss him already.

—Christopher Lee

I remember he was a funny, funny guy, but a lot of it was fairly unprintable, the stuff he came out with. He was extremely forbearing. I had to kill him with an axe, and we had this very hard rubber axe. I hit him and Vincent died gracefully.

—Ian Ogilvy

For years they'd been saying I looked like Vincent Price and he didn't object. Nor did he mind my joke about, when they couldn't afford him, they got me for half-Price. Now that he's gone, I'd forego any price to have him back. I live just two blocks from the "House on Haunted Hill" where he made one of his more famous films, so I have a constant daily reminder of him—not that I need to be reminded of that grand man. He was truly one of Nature's rare noblemen.

In the science-fiction field an annual honor is given to an individual who has been observed to have a big heart. It is, in fact, called the Big Heart Award. Occasionally they are given posthumously. I guess Vincent Price was never considered because he wasn't exactly a part of the sci-fi community. But now there has been such evidence of his selflessness and good deeds, I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what at the next World Science Fiction Convention I will be called upon to present a plaque in honor of Vincent Leonard Price, Jr., better known as simply Vincent Price—in fact, St. Vincent.

—Forrest J Ackerman





# Vincent Price as I Remember Him

## by Roger Corman

Vincent Price was a well-educated, highly-cultured man. I cast him in our first film together, *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER*, because the character of Roderick Usher was very close to his own persona: handsome, educated, cultured, and sensitive. In the Edgar Allan Poe story, Roderick Usher is a gentle, aristocratic man who progressively descends into madness. My feeling was that the audience should be frightened of this character, but not in conscious reaction to his sinister features or brute strength. Instead, I envisioned a refined, attractive man whose intelligent but tormented mind operates in realms far beyond the minds of others, and who therefore inspires a deeper fear. In Vincent I found exactly the man I was looking for.

Vincent and I got along so well on that shoot that I ended by using him in seven more films, among them *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM*, *THE HAUNTED PALACE*, and *THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH*. In every case, he was a valued contributor to the creative process.

Only once do I remember Vincent being puzzled by my filmmaking requirements. In *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER*, he was asked to speak the line, "The house lives. The house breathes." He came to me and asked in great bewilderment, "What does that mean?" "It means," I replied, "that we're able to make this picture." It seemed that the good folks at American International Pictures, the company providing our financing, were worried that this was a horror film without a monster. To win them over, I had promised that the house itself would be our monster. Now I had to make good on my promise. Once this was explained to him, Vincent said, "I understand totally." He went on to deliver the line with a subtle intensity that became for me one of the high points of the entire film.

Vincent had been classically trained as an actor in England, but also knew something of the Stanislavsky Method, as expounded by the Actors Studio. I myself had studied the Method, and our approaches to acting meshed extremely well. In the roles he played for me, I admired how Vincent was able to blend his classical training, his Method experience, and elements of his own character to create indelible film portraits.

Aside from his powers as a dramatic actor, Vincent was surprisingly adept at humor. His abilities along these lines were put to the test in *THE RAVEN*, a film intended to combine horror with comedy. Vincent's contribution of jokes and comic bits to the shooting script added greatly to the picture's overall humorous effect. On the set of *THE RAVEN*, Vincent had to adjust to the presence of two veteran costars, Peter Lorre and Boris Karloff, as well as a new, young actor, Jack Nicholson. He showed extraordinary flexibility in working harmoniously with Jack (trained in the Method), Boris (schooled in the English classical style), and Peter, who did anything that came into his mind at any given moment.

Peter Lorre's great talent was for improvising, which he did with great wit and panache. This on-the-set spontaneity did not sit well with Boris Karloff, who, near-

ing the end of a long and distinguished career, expected to do his scenes precisely as written. Inevitably, there was some friction between these two strong personalities. Fortunately for me, Vincent was able to strike a balance in his own acting style, adapting to Peter's looseness, but also playing scenes with Boris that were models of the classical approach. His personal graciousness in bending to the demands of two conflicting egos was a great help to me in what could have been difficult circumstances.

Vincent had a well-

deserved reputation as a host and a gourmet chef. I was privileged to attend several parties at his home. The food, the wine, the decor: Everything was planned in the most exquisite detail. And he had the gift of eliciting sparkling conversation from his guests, so that it was a joy to sit at his table. I suspect that, by inviting me to dine, Vincent was trying to improve my eating habits, which tended toward the Spartan back then. In fact, in our filmmaking days he used to joke about sending me CARE packages to keep me from starvation.

In addition to his other achievements, Vincent was also a great collector of art. He gave me invaluable advice when I decided to start my own collection.

There is no question that Vincent Price was a remarkable actor, and a remarkable man. His friendship enriched my life, and for that I will always be grateful.



Roger Corman and Vincent Price

# A Priceless Man Remembered

## by Michael Mallory

On break from college, I was working as a theatrical apprentice at the Flint, Michigan, link of the Kenley Players summer theater chain. A great opportunity for a teenage actor hopeful, to be sure, but by the end of the season I had no intention of returning for more. One thing—and one thing only—brought me back for a second season: the chance to meet Vincent Price.

Like so many others, I was a fan (more than a fan, almost an idolater) and, like so many others, I found Vincent Price, the man, to be just as wonderful as Vincent Price, the actor. He was the star, of course, playing the Devil in the musical DAMN YANKEES (yes, he could sing, and quite well), while I had just a walk-on, but he was never too busy to stop and chat with a fledgling performer.

During that week in July 1976 (to hell with the bicentennial; I was working with Vincent Price!), I plied him with questions he must have heard a thousand times before, but each one he answered graciously and humorously. I learned about a third Dr. Phibes film, PHIBES RESURRECTUS, which was already scripted, but could not get financing. I also fell victim to the notorious Price sense of humor.

Vinnie (pardon the familiarity) really did enjoy scaring people, either *en masse* on screen or one at a time. (He once replaced his wax figure at the Movieland Wax Museum; when a visitor got close, he would suddenly "come to life" and squirt the person with a syringe.) Once, between the matinée and evening performances, I was sweeping the stage (one of the glamorous duties of an apprentice), believing that I was alone in the theater. I pulled aside the black teaser curtain at the proscenium in order to sweep, and there behind it stood Vincent. "Good eeeevening!" he rumbled, as only he could. After my heart started up again, he clapped a friendly hand on my shoulder, chuckled gleefully, and strode away to his dressing room.

In another memorable instance, he fell victim to a cast of practical jokers given to composing the filthiest limericks imaginable about each other and leaving them on the set during the show. (The one about Pia Zadora, who

played Lola, was a beaut!). They had planted one behind a piece of scenery where Vincent had to stay crouched until his cue (not easy when you're 6'4"). It graphically detailed the imaginary boudoir techniques of his British wife, Coral Browne, who was with him for the tour. (Hint: What rhymes with Coral?) We watched from the wings as the crouching Vinnie donned his glasses so he could read the limerick, shook with laughter until he nearly collapsed, and almost missed his cue. When he came off stage he tore the limerick into a hundred pieces and handed them to me. "Here, scatter this," he said; "If Coral reads it, she'll kill me!"

I saw him a few more times over the years, and each time he professed to recognize me, though I'm not sure he really did. Vincent was the kind of person who would pretend that he did out of politeness and just to make you feel good. (He once admitted as much to me regarding someone else.) Our last meeting was backstage after a performance of his one-man show about Oscar Wilde. "Did you like it?" he eagerly asked my wife and I, and he really meant it—this internationally renowned star and screen legend genuinely wanted to know what we thought. That was Vinnie.

I nearly had the chance to work with him again last year, this

time writing for him in a special ceremony to be staged at Disneyland, but he was already too ill to make an appearance.

It's hard to accept that Vincent Price is now gone. For a man who was so incredibly alive, even in what most of us would have considered old age, death doesn't even seem possible. No one in any profession gave more of themselves to so many people, and had such a grand time doing it.

We'll miss you, Vinnie.



The devil, it says! Vincent Price holds a note (not the limerick) in a 1976 production of DAMN YANKEES. That's *Scarlet Street's* own Michael Mallory in the droopy mustache.

Michael Mallory appeared in the movies FRANCES, ELEANOR: FIRST LADY OF THE WORLD (with Coral Browne), and STAYING ALIVE, and on TV's DAYS OF OUR LIVES, before realizing that he was really a writer.



For me, Vincent Price was essentially a 19th-century gentleman, with his haunted, patrician face, his innate elegance and grace, coupled with a wonderful languorous charm. He had a certain stricken quality of someone born outside of his time.

I think he belonged to the era of Edwin Booth; he could have been a great classical actor along the lines of Gielgud, Scofield, or Olivier.

He transcended all his roles with enormous power and intelligence. I can imagine him in the early days of the British Old Vic theater, surrounded by great dark velvet and carved, gilded balconies: a poetic and solitary figure, walking alone, draped in a windy cape, down nocturnal cobblestone streets.

I was very young when I met him, but he left an indelible impact on me with his intense presence. He was a gracious and lovely man, and everyone who knew him felt terribly bereaved of his passing, and privileged to have known him.

—Barbara Steele



He was a delightful man, remarkably varied in his interests and enthusiasms.

—Celeste Holm



Vincent Price was synonymous with mystery for 30 years and with MYSTERY! for eight years. He was a thorough professional, a favorite of the crew, an hysterical storyteller, and a man so full of love that he inspired us all.

—Rebecca Eaton

Besides working together, he was a great friend of mine. Every time I had him in a picture, it was very delightful, because I enjoyed him and he always gave an extremely good performance.

—Charles Bennett



I remember his deep sensitivity and compassion on the set of DIARY OF A MADMAN. When I worked with him, I was astonished that this man would be so gentle and so caring—a true, true, true gentleman. Since it was one of my first films, and he knew that, he didn't have to be caring, but he was in every way. I thought, "What a nice way to be remembered." You know, in life, you're writing on the board all the time—and he wrote his own history.

—Nancy Kovack



# The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

## Rathbone's Finest Hour

by Richard Valley

*In all the world there is no other man like me, one man whom I can call my friend, the only one who can be trusted. Professor Moriarty has been dead for many years. All the great men have opposed him, are dead. He is the most dangerous criminal England has ever known.*

Sherlock Holmes, May 1894

The story of how Sherlock Holmes, in the person of Basil Rathbone, came to write those words, not in May 1894, but in June 1939, is an oft-told, and perhaps apocryphal one. Twentieth Century-Fox's polo-mad mogul, Darryl F. Zanuck, so the legend goes, met Rathbone at a cocktail party and mentioned that the British actor would be perfect as Sherlock Holmes. The rest was history.

Another version has screenwriter/producer Gene Markey attending a dinner party at which Zanuck, but not



Rathbone, was present, suggesting Rathbone and Nigel Bruce (as Dr. Watson) for a series of Sherlock Holmes adventures. Again, history in the making. Whoever originated the notion, it's not surprising that the greatest of Great Detectives would find a temporary home at Fox; among the studio money-makers was a series of Charlie Chan mysteries, already numbering 17 by the time the first Holmes film, *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* (1939), was in the can. (Mr. Moto was also politely slinking about the back-lot byways, ably impersonated by that diminutive scenery chewer, Peter Lorre.)

*THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* began filming on December 29, 1938. While it was still in production, Fox, true to form, announced in *The Hollywood Reporter* that they were considering making it the first in a series of Holmes movies. In April of the following year, a further item revealed that Holmes was, indeed, being developed as a series. Rathbone and Bruce would follow their adventures on the moor with a sequel titled *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, based on the William Gillette play of the same name.

Retitled *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, the production rolled on June 3, 1939. Three days later, on June 6th, it was announced that Lionel Atwill, who had played Dr. Mortimer in *THE HOUND*, had been signed for a featured role. (Unless he disguised himself as fellow screen nasty George Zucco, Atwill is nowhere to be seen in *THE ADVENTURES*. He did turn up again in a Holmes film, but not until the series had moved to Universal, where he played Moriarty—the role assayed by Zucco in *THE ADVENTURES*—in 1942's *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE SECRET WEAPON*.)

With July came word that Fox, which had options on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories, intended to make one Sherlock Holmes film a year for an indefinite period, and that the studio was negotiating with Rathbone and Bruce to continue in their roles.

By the end of the month, however, the deal had soured. London critics had come down heavily on *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*, finding the production "too American". (Bruce, considered one of the least "authentic" of Watsons by modern-day Sherlockian purists, surprisingly got much the best notices.)

Finally, in December, it was reported that 20th Century Fox's plans for a series of Sherlock Holmes mysteries

had been "temporarily abandoned". The Conan Doyle estate, displeased with *THE ADVENTURES*, required that the studio adapt the original tales and refrain from concocting non-Canonical adventures—something that Fox was unwilling to do.

Sherlock Holmes would rise again to fight Moriarty, the Nazis, the Spider Woman, Colonel Sebastian Moran, and the Oxton Creeper in a well-loved batch of Universal "B"s—but *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* marks the last time on screen that Rathbone and Bruce portrayed the Baker Street duo in their proper Victorian milieu. For some, it is simply the best Sherlock Holmes film ever made. For others, Moriarty's scheme to pull off the crime of the century is, in the words of Chris Steinbrunner and Norman Michaels (*The Films of Sherlock Holmes*, Citadel, 1978), "so complicated and unwieldy that it is embarrassing to see it almost work".

Steinbrunner and Michael have a point, but they fail to mention the primary reason for the confusion: *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* is missing some essential pieces of its puzzle. What ultimately graced the cutting-room floor ties up most of *THE ADVENTURES'* loose plot strands and, however briefly, lends the movie just those Doylean elements that might have won greater approval from Sir Arthur's estate and revived the series at Fox.

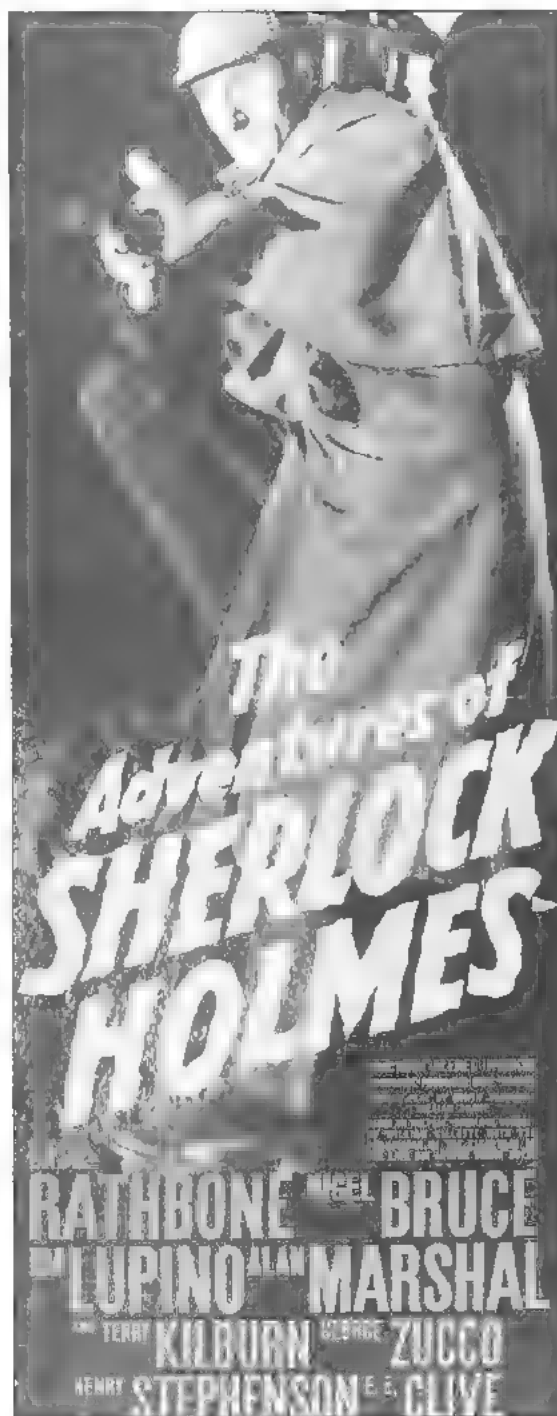
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Extraordinary good sense have gone into the making of *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. Based rather freely on William Gillette's dramatization of the great detective stories, the film is at once an exciting thriller and a faithful recreation of a famous literary figure.

—Howard Barnes,  
*New York Herald Tribune*

The picture wastes no time setting the wheels of its convoluted plot spinning. Following the opening titles (behind which Rathbone hunts clues with a bull's-eye lantern) and a look at

Sherlock's penned remarks about his nemesis, we are whisked to the Old Bailey, where Professor James Moriarty (George Zucco) is on trial for murder. The evidence being insufficient to support a conviction, a verdict of not guilty is given mere moments before Holmes (Basil Rathbone) bursts upon the scene:





**LEFT:** Holmes (Basil Rathbone) fiddles while Watson (Nigel Bruce) burns. **CENTER:** Alan Marshall and Ida Lupino play a decidedly unromantic romantic pair in *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (1939). **RIGHT:** Mrs. Hudson (Mary Gordon) appeared throughout the Rathbone/Bruce series, but Billy (Terry Kilburn) turned up only once.

*Holmes:* But, milord—you can't let Moriarty go free! He killed Lorait! I can prove it! I can destroy his alibi!

But the detective never gets the opportunity to present his proof, and Moriarty is reluctantly set free.

As scripted by William A. Drake and Edwin Blum, the sequence continued with the presiding justice (Holmes Herbert) clearing the courtroom and Holmes, aided by Dr. Gates (Ivan Simpson), chief astronomer at the Greenwich Observatory, attempting to show that Moriarty had tampered with the Greenwich control clock in order to establish an alibi during the time of Lorait's murder. (It's never explained why the Professor, head of a massive criminal organization, should bother personally to murder anyone.) These plot machinations have no bearing on the rest of the story and were wisely cut—though Gates, never identified, still makes his belated entrance with Holmes. As the scene now plays, the Great Detective is simply too late, and, minutes later, finds himself sharing a cab with the Napoleon of Crime, who has offered him a lift back to Baker Street. There follows some of the choicest dialogue in the film, delivered with casual aplomb by Rathbone and Zucco:

*Holmes:* You've a magnificent brain, Moriarty. I admire it. I admire it so much I'd like to present it, pickled in alcohol, to the London Medical Society.  
*Moriarty:* It would make an interesting exhibit. Holmes, you've only now barely missed sending me to the gallows. You are the one man in England clever enough to defeat me. The situation has become impossible.

*Holmes:* Have you any suggestions?

*Moriarty:* I'm going to break you, Holmes. I'm going to bring off, right under your nose, the most incredible crime of the century. And you'll never suspect it, until it's too late. That will be the end of you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

Surprisingly, we don't follow Holmes when he is let off at 221B Baker Street, but press on to Moriarty's mansion for the first of two charmingly perverse scenes between the crime lord and his quivering butler, Dawes

(Frank Dawson). Here, we gather some clues to Moriarty's dastardly plot: a strange, mournful dirge played by a shadowy figure, an anonymous letter, and a hastily scrawled drawing of a man with a bird hung around his neck. The Professor explains to Bassick (Arthur Hohl), his chief henchman:

*Moriarty:* My whole success depends upon a peculiarity of Holmes' brain, its perpetual restlessness, its constant struggle to escape boredom.

*Bassick:* Holmes again?

*Moriarty:* Always Holmes, until the end. He's like a spoiled boy who picks watches to pieces, but loses interest in one toy as soon as he's given another. So I am presenting the ingenious but fickle Mr. Holmes with two toys in the order in which I mean him to have them.

If *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* has a major structural flaw, it is that, in giving Holmes two separate but interrelated mysteries to investigate, one "toy" will likely fascinate not only Holmes, but the viewer, much more than the other. Still, Drake and Blum camouflage this defect so deftly that they make it all but invisible. They also heighten suspense by letting us in on the bare bones of Moriarty's scheme. When, in the very next scene, Holmes acquires both the letter and the sketch, we know which one must engage his mind if he hopes to thwart his enemy—and we know that Holmes' restless curiosity will make the wrong choice all but a certainty.

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The strange case of the chinchilla fetish—the Traitor's Gate—the fiendish instrument that strangles, crushes, vanishes—the albatross of doom! A woman in love, the victim! The British crown jewels, the loot!

—press release

Barring *SHERLOCK HOLMES FACES DEATH* (1943), which opens with Watson doctoring shell-shocked officers at Hurlstone Towers, *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* is the only Rathbone/Bruce entry in which the physician appears not to be a resident of 221B Baker Street—though no mention is made of his having

taken a wife, invariably his reason for setting up house-keeping elsewhere.

Housekeeping is much in evidence in this, the series' largest, brightest representation of fiction's most famous address. As Holmes sits before a covered glass of common houseflies, playing the scales on his violin, Mrs. Hudson (Mary Gordon) bustles about with a tray, and Billy (Terry Kilburn) sweeps dust under the hall carpet. Into this scene of domestic bustle, Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce) makes his bluff, cheery entry, exchanging pleasantries with the landlady and making sport of the boy, who, much to his mortification, is decked out in a frilly apron.

Billy, the Baker Street "boy in buttons" created by Gillette for his 1899 play and later appropriated by Conan Doyle for two plays (1910's *THE SPECKLED BAND* and 1921's *THE CROWN DIAMOND*), a novel (1914's *The Valley of Fear*), and two short stories ("The Mazarin Stone" and "The Problem of Thor Bridge", both 1921), is one of the film's few links to the stage production. (The boy, in fact, has much more to perform in Gillette's play than Watson, while Mrs. Hudson never appears at all.)

Watson enters the sitting room to find Holmes plucking away. ("I trust I don't come inopportunistly?") Holmes sets the violin aside and shows Watson a note that arrived the previous evening. Dashing audience expectations, it is neither of the two communications prepared by Moriarty, but a third:

My dear Mr. Holmes:

I am taking the liberty of calling on you at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning to ask you what may appear a silly question—whether or not I should go to a garden party on Saturday at Lady Conyngham's. I beg you to see me. I'm in desperate need of advice.

Sincerely yours,  
Ann Brandon

"Oh, somebody's pulling your leg," scoffs Watson, but the detective has already learned a few facts: The girl lives with her brother; she's very rich, the result of a mining fortune; and her father died 10 years previously under mysterious circumstances. Nevertheless, Watson wonders how his friend can "trifle with inconsequentialities when Moriarty's loose on London". Retrieving his violin, Holmes assures him that steps have already been taken.

Watson: Well, what are you doing?

Holmes: Nothing.

Watson: Nothing?

Holmes: My dear Watson, you needn't check me back as if I were an invoice. I said "nothing." That's the best thing I can possibly do at the moment. Moriarty's as curious about my movements as I am about his. So I sit here and wait for him to come to me. And he'll come—never doubt it.

Watson: So you fiddle while Rome burns!

Holmes: A daring metaphor, Watson.

Watson: And what are you doing with that infernal fiddle and those flies?

Holmes: I was observing the reaction on the common housefly of the chromatic scale.

Watson: A brilliant experiment!

Holmes: Yes, it will be if I can find the note that annoys the housefly. Then one need only play that one note and—psst—all the houseflies disappear.

Watson: Amazing!

Holmes: Oh, no, no—elementary, my dear Watson. Purely elementary.

The above is worth quoting at length for several reasons, not the least being that the business with the flies gives *THE ADVENTURES* its charming conclusion, one of three hastily devised with the film already in production. It also gives Rathbone a chance to say "Elementary, my dear Watson," a phrase never actually uttered in the Canon. More important, it addresses that subject of endless debate among Sherlockians the world over: the Nigel Bruce problem.

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Nigel Bruce's Watson was, as before, no fit companion, one might think, for the intellectually brilliant Holmes, but a likeable buffoon of a man.

—David Stuart Davies, *Holmes of the Movies*

It began quite favorably: "Mr. Bruce contributes a rounded and credible portrayal," wrote Howard Barnes in his *New York Herald Tribune* critique of *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*. Reviewing *THE ADVENTURES*, Howard Rushmore of *The Daily Worker* nominated "... for top honors Nigel Bruce, whose Dr. Watson needs no needle but a loud huzza for his excellent supporting comedy". However, by the time *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VOICE OF TERROR* rolled around a mere three years later, Barnes was already calling Bruce "highly unsatisfactory"—a view that pretty much prevails to this day.

That said, there are those who think Nigel Bruce has taken a bum rap. It is an argument not without merit.

Consider that Bruce, whose reputation rested on his ability to make silly-ass Englishmen endearing, could do no more than perform the material given him—and that, in writing to Bruce's strengths, Blum and Drake share the blame for making Watson a bit of a goof. Consider, too, that Bruce was hardly the first actor to play the role for comedy: Reginald Owen, for instance, was far from the Watson of literary memory in 1932's *SHERLOCK HOLMES*.







Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce) spies on Jerrold Hunter (Alan Marshall) and finds him meeting with Moriarty (George Zucco).

How big a buffoon is Watson in *THE ADVENTURES*? Pretty big. In the course of the action, he blurts out information which the Great Detective wishes to keep secret, botches an assignment to shadow a suspect, plays dead in a gutter, and soaks his leg in Moriarty's lily pond.

But note this: Holmes never bothers to tell Watson to keep his trap shut, nor is he very specific about the assignment until well after Watson bungles it. When the good doctor, in a genuinely amusing interlude with another silly-ass (William Austin), plays dead, he does so at Holmes' behest. (The scene begins with Watson calling "All right, Holmes, I've found it!" before setting himself down on an "X" marking the murder site; still, it's fairly evident that he is following the detective's instructions.) That leaves the lily pond, and anyone is apt to step in something while climbing through a window into a pitch-black room. (Okay, okay, so he does it twice . . .)

There's more to say in Bruce's defense. Throughout *THE ADVENTURES*, it is Watson who is the more pragmatic of the companions. Never, while Holmes plays with the "toy" provided by the Professor, does he fail to remind his friend of his duty—and since that duty refers unequivocally (if unexpectedly) to Moriarty's "crime of the century", it is Watson who acts with a maturity lacking in Holmes. If further evidence is needed that Watson's dull practicality sometimes gets the job done where Holmes' eccentric genius falls flat, one need only look to the closing images of *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. But back to the story . . .

Would you smile slightly at Ida Lupino's terror when she receives a sketch of a man with an albatross around his neck?

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Besides Watson, Sherlock Holmes receives three other visitors this fine spring day. The first is Sir Ronald Rams-gate (Henry Stephenson), Constable of the Tower of London and recipient of a letter proclaiming the eminent theft of the Star of Delhi, a gift to Queen Victoria from the Maharajah of Rapur. Dismissing the letter as crank work, Holmes is nevertheless in the process of assuring Sir Ronald that he will ensure the emerald's safe delivery when he is interrupted by the sudden arrival of the unhappy Ann Brandon (Ida Lupino).

Sir Ronald departs, and we quickly learn the reason for Ann's distress. Both her brother and her fiancé (the family solicitor) have insisted that the young woman, who is convinced she's being followed, attend Lady Conyngham's garden party. The implied motive for their demand: that, by doing so, Ann will absent herself from danger. The danger: a death threat, dated May 11th, in the form of a now-familiar sketch. (Oddly, the threat isn't addressed to Ann, but to her brother. Maybe he should have gone to Lady Conyngham's.)

*Ann:* My father received just such a note before he was murdered.

*Holmes:* Murdered!

*Ann:* Ten years ago—on May the 11th. Scotland Yard couldn't make anything of it. But I saw him—my father—lying there on the pavement with the back of his head all—

A fourth visitor appears: the fiancé, Jerrold Hunter (Alan Marshall), who has traced Ann to Baker Street. Hunter couldn't be more obvious a red herring if he'd been doused with sauce and served as seafood. For one thing,

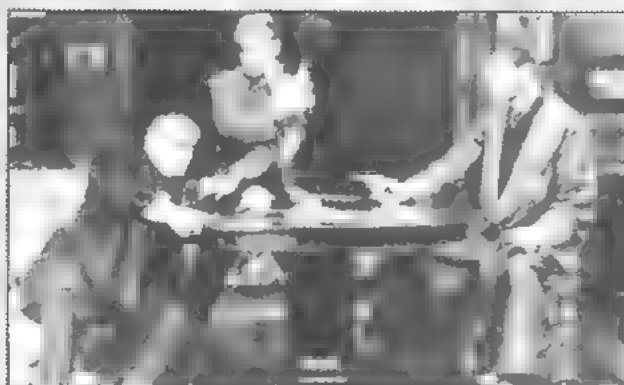
*Continued on page 38*

# The Billy Club

Created by William Gillette for his 1899 play **SHERLOCK HOLMES**, based on a reference to an unnamed boy in the Conan Doyle story "A Case of Identity" (1891), Billy is that rarity—a character born in a media adaptation of a literary work who ultimately finds his way into the original source material. On stage, the pageboy overshadowed Dr. Watson as the Great Detective's companion. On the big and small screens, however, he's had rather less of an impact. In print, Billy turns up periodically in pastiches—and even had a book all to himself.



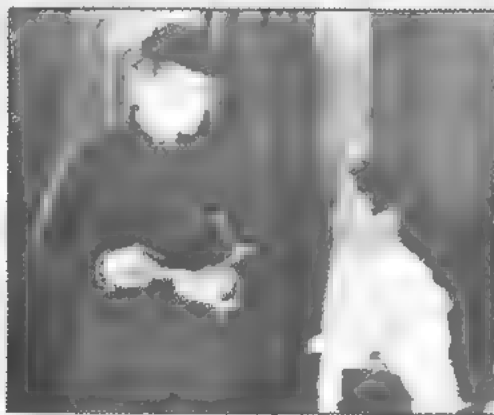
Charles Chaplin (1903)



Burford Hampden (1916)



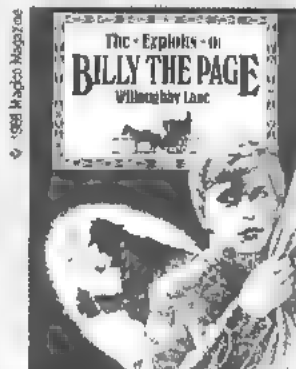
Dean Magri (1991)



Jerry Devine (1922)



Howard Leeds (1933)



Christian Slater played Billy on stage in 1981, and a pseudo-Billy in 1986's **THE NAME OF THE ROSE**.



LEFT: Setting up the shot in which Ann Brandon (Ida Lupino) plays the death music for Holmes and Watson (Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce). RIGHT: The scene as it appears in *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*.

## HOLMES

*Continued from page 36*

he has forbidden Ann to approach Sherlock Holmes for help. For another, he dismisses the sketch as "some kind of joke, or the work of a mental incompetent".

Hunter is sent packing, with Watson hot on his trail. Holmes has Billy fetch a cab and leaves with Ann for the Kensington Museum. There, the detective resumes his questioning, in dialogue whose full meaning sadly vanished in the film's editing:

*Holmes:* You're certain there was no one who nursed a grievance against your father or your family?

*Ann:* No, I've told you my brother and I live very quietly. My father—well, I admit he was a hard man, but men who go out into new worlds have to be. But he was honorable and fine.

*Holmes:* Tell me, have you ever, through your family or Mr. Hunter, heard the name of a man called Moriarty?

*Ann:* Moriarty? No.

*Holmes:* Somehow, I had the feeling of renewing an old acquaintance.

At which point we cut to Watson, who has followed Jerrold Hunter to his office just in time to see Moriarty depart the scene!

Rushing away to report his discovery, Watson arrives at the museum mere moments after Holmes has identified the ominous bird in the sketch as an albatross and Ann has connected it to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 1798 poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner":

*Ann:* "Water, water, everywhere, and all the boards did shrink. Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink."

*Holmes:* You've hit on it! "And instead of the Cross, the albatross about my neck was hung." This is no childish prank, Miss Brandon, but a cryptic warning of avenging death! We must go to your brother at once!

And off they all go!

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If there was nothing else left to him, he could at least devote his life to revenge . . . . As he stood by the desolate fire, he felt that the only one thing which could assuage his grief would be thorough and complete retribution, brought by his own hand upon his enemies.

—*A Study in Scarlet*

"Avenging death!" The concept permeates the Canon. It shades the advent of Sherlock Holmes—the novels *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) and *The Sign of Four* (1890)—and turns up time and again in the short stories, most prominently in "The Five Orange Pips" (1891), "The Gloria Scott" (1893), "The Resident Patient" (1893), "Black Peter" (1904), "Wisteria Lodge" (1908), and "The Red Circle" (1911). The plots of "The Norwood Builder" (1903), "The Dancing Men" (1903), and "The Priory School" (1904) hinge on past slights, real or imagined, redressed. Before Holmes defangs the spectral beast, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901) is avenging death personified—and the final novel, *The Valley of Fear*, concerns the employment of no less a genius than Professor Moriarty to mete out bloody vengeance.

In mysteries, the past has a way of catching up with you. From the late 1950s until his death in 1983, Ross Macdonald concentrated almost exclusively on mysteries whose solutions lay in the distant history of his characters. In narrowing his focus to a single theme, Macdonald created a melancholy atmosphere of inevitable, often inherited doom. ("The doomsters", as an old lady tags her family misfortune in the 1958 novel of the same name.) In the world of Sherlock Holmes, "the doomsters" present John Openshaw with an envelope containing five dried orange pips, who scrawl in blood the word *rache* on a study wall in Lauriston Garden, who place the sign of the four on the body of Major John Sholto, who (presumably) hound Sir Charles Baskerville to destruction—and who send, through the contrivance of Moriarty, a seemingly harmless sketch to the Brandons. In its offering of this "cryptic warning"; in its destruction, spanning decades, of a single family; in its use of Moriarty's vast organization as a sort of Victorian Murder, Incorporated, *THE ADVENTURES OF*





As Sherlock Holmes, Basil Rathbone had the good fortune to play opposite some of the screen's greatest character actors, including hearty Lionel Atwill (LEFT), chilly Henry Daniell (RIGHT), and crafty George Zucco (BELOW).

SHERLOCK HOLMES catches the doom-laden spirit of Conan Doyle as does no other film in the series.

That spirit hovers over the scenes following the Kensington Museum sequence, as Holmes, Watson, and Ann rush to save Lloyd Brandon (Peter Willes), even as the pale young man, on Hunter's advice, walks the foggy streets of London on his way home. Passing a hansom driven by Bassick and entering a small park just outside his house, Lloyd disappears into the fog—and a half-choked scream is heard. Holmes and his companions arrive moments later to find Lloyd murdered and Hunter, who had been following his friend, already being questioned in the Brandon house by Inspector Bristol (E. E. Clive).

\*\*\*

Say, where is everybody?

—Lestrade (Dennis Hoey) in *TERROR BY NIGHT*

Inspector Bristol is cut from the same dim cloth as fellow Scotland Yarders Lestrade, Gregson, and Jones. He affects a superior attitude toward Holmes, but is quick to accept the "amateur's" help—especially "in the usual way", meaning without credit. In a matter of minutes, Holmes has convinced Bristol that Lloyd Brandon was strangled, not clubbed to death ("The wounds on the back of his head were administered post-mortem"), and that it would be better to release Hunter than to lock him up in prison. Hunter tries, without success, to justify his actions to Ann:

*Hunter.* I did my best to guard him, day and night, yet they found him all the same—there in the empty street.

*Ann:* But if you knew Lloyd was in danger, why did you try to keep me from seeing Sherlock Holmes? Why did you follow Lloyd with a revolver in your pocket? It makes me afraid sometimes even of you.

One of the film's few weaknesses is that Ann's questions are never satisfactorily answered (Granted, Hunter was armed and shadowing Lloyd in order to protect him, but why should he have objected to Ann consulting Holmes?) The problem is compounded by Alan Marshall's less than winning performance. The Australian actor, who died in 1961 while appearing with Mae West in the play

*SEXTETTE*, was the sort of second-string matinée idol for whom the word "smarmy" was coined. (Picture Zachary Scott, beefier but with less talent.) Marshall was in his ele-

*Continued on page 42*



# The Mark of Zucco

One of the screen's master villains, George Zucco (1886–1960) graced many a horror film—and also a few musicals! A noted stage actor, a teacher at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, Zucco made his motion-picture debut in *THE DREYFUS CASE* (1931). He alternated stage and screen appearances before settling in Hollywood in the mid-30s.

Perhaps more than most actors who starred regularly in low-budget fright flicks, Zucco lent his presence to major studio productions at the same time, moving from the Paramount programmer *THE MONSTER AND THE GIRL* (1940) to MGM's lush, Cukor-directed *A WOMAN'S FACE* (1941) to Universal's *THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1942).

Among the actor's numerous credits: *MADAME X* (1937), *LORD JEFF* (1938), *CHARLIE CHAN IN HONOLULU* (1938), *MARIE ANTOINETTE* (1938), *THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME* (1939), *THE MUMMY'S HAND* (1940), *MY FAVORITE BLONDE* (1942), *THE MAD MONSTER* (1942), *HOLY MATRIMONY* (1943), *WEEKEND AT THE WALDORF* (1945), *CAPTAIN FROM CASTILE* (1947), *TARZAN AND THE MERMAIDS* (1948), and *THE BARKLEYS OF BROADWAY* (1949).



THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1942)

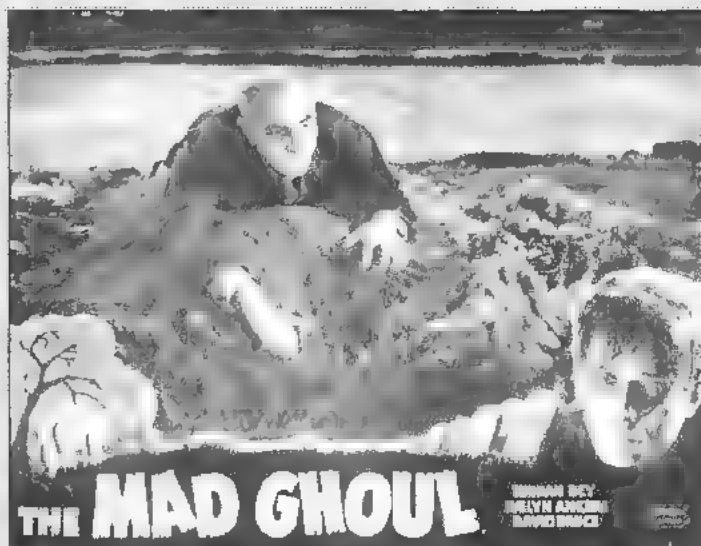


LURED (1947)

Everett Collection



William Powell, Zucco, and Myrna Loy in **AFTER THE THIN MAN** (1936).



ABOVE: Zucco, Basil Rathbone, and Thurston Hall in **SHERLOCK HOLMES IN WASHINGTON** (1943).  
BELOW: Paulette Goddard and Zucco in **THE CAT AND THE CANARY** (1939).



John Carradine, Zucco, and Bela Lugosi (Seated) in **VOODOO MAN** (1944).





## HOLMES

*Continued from page 39*

ment playing scoundrels and wastrels, which he did as early as *AFTER THE THIN MAN* (1936) and as late as *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* (1959). In *THE ADVENTURES*, we never quite trust the family solicitor because there's nothing in Marshall's portrayal to allow us to warm to the character. Not only does Hunter seem unworthy of Ann's love, but Marshall appears unworthy of being Ida Lupino's leading man. (Perhaps wisely, the film affords the lovers no on-screen reconciliation to strain audience credulity.)

\*\*\*

One can't help liking the new Holmes film . . . with Basil Rathbone in the calabash and a swirl of fog standing by for its entrance cues.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

*THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* offers no comic interlude quite so outré as the sight of Holmes nestled snugly in his pipe while a pea souper waits for its lines—this is Conan Doyle, after all, not Lewis Carroll—but it does contain some amusing, even Carollesque moments.

*Passerby:* Perhaps I can find a doctor.

*Watson:* I'm a doctor. What's the matter with you?

*Passerby:* I'm all right. I was thinking of you.

*Watson:* Why?

*Passerby:* But . . . but aren't you ill?

*Watson:* Certainly not. I'm dead.

Resting comfortably in the gutter, Watson has at last found someone more foolish even than he—and Nigel Bruce plays the scene for all its worth. (Bruce's frequent skirmishes with Dennis Hoey's Inspector Lestrade in the Universal series work in much the same way, but they never quite reach this level of absurdity.)

Meanwhile, Holmes uncovers several clues missed by Bristol and his men: the footprints of a (supposedly) club-footed man; a twig torn from a tree, "perhaps by something hurtling past"; and a tiny chinchilla's foot.

Back at the Brandon residence, Ann sits with her brother's body. Suddenly, a haunting dirge draws the mourner to the window—where she spies, in the street below, a grim, mustachioed figure (George Regas) playing the flute. Ann screams and faints, the figure (Mateo by name) jumps in Bassick's cab and speeds off, and Holmes and Watson race back to the house. There, Ann tells the twosome about the melody:

*Ann:* I heard it once before, Mr. Holmes. Only once. When I was a little girl in South American—the night my father was killed!

The overwrought young woman attempts to play the haunting tune for Holmes and Watson, but her courage at last gives out:

*Ann:* There's death in every note of it. Mr. Holmes; would you mind going now, please?

*Holmes:* Yes, yes—of course. You must try to get some sleep. It's been a terrible day for you.

Who ever said that the World's Greatest Detective was incapable of understatement?

\*\*\*

The curse on the Brandon family, with the enigmatic albatross warnings and the stranglings from afar, has been nicely integrated with the great jewel robbery which Professor Moriarty almost pulled off. Even if you know the outcome of the plot, as all Conan Doyle fans undoubtedly do, the story has a steady tension which keeps it absorbing all the way . . .

—Howard Barnes,  
*New York Herald Tribune*



Mateo takes deadly aim . . .

Even Conan Doyle fans might find it difficult knowing the outcome of a plot they've never experienced before—and *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, for all its faithfulness to the characters and tone of the Canon, is definitely an original. Nor, as noted, does it have much in common, beyond the inclusion of Moriarty, Bassick, and Billy, with the William Gillette play. (Much to Rathbone's relief; he wrote, "This play, believe me, is so ludicrously funny today that the only possible way to present it . . . would be to play it like *THE DRUNKARD*, with Groucho Marx as Sherlock Holmes . . .")

Billy, one of the Gillette hold-overs, makes his second and last appearance in the Baker Street scene immediately following the events of Lloyd Brandon's death. Much to Watson's annoyance, the boy takes particular interest in

the chinchilla's foot. Holmes' young "detective in training" deduces that the object is a good-luck charm owned by a man from either Chile or Bolivia—"because that's the only place these chinchillas grow."

Holmes sends the lad on his way with sixpence, and tells Watson that he has identified the music "as an ancient Inca funeral dirge, still used by the Indians in the remote Chilean Andes as a chant for the dead." (Holmes doesn't rub it in that Billy seems to have been correct in his deductions.) His discovery delights the detective, but Watson has both feet planted firmly, if unimaginatively, on the ground.

*Watson:* What on earth has that got to do with Professor Moriarty or the Star of Delhi?

Again, it is the doctor who hits the nail on the head: While Holmes, in his dialogue with Ann, has brought up the Professor's name in connection with the sketch, Watson "the incorrigible bungler" is the first to link him with the Star of Delhi—the glittering object from which Moriarty has (successfully) drawn Holmes' attention.

On cue, Sir Ronald arrives to remind his friend of his promise, but Holmes is completely preoccupied with his "toy". The old gentleman departs in Bassick's cab as Ann arrives with disturbing news: She has received the same death threat as her brother, this one dated May 13th, the night of Lady Conyngham's garden party (and the arrival of the Star of Delhi). Holmes urges Ann to attend the gathering:

*Holmes:* I want you to make an appearance—perhaps take a walk through the grounds. I warn you it may involve considerable risk. But I think the kind of woman I take you to be would rather risk everything on one venture than live the rest of her life in the shadow of doubt—and death.

Ann agrees, Holmes delegates "the most dependable man I know"—Watson—to guard the Star of Delhi, and the stage is set for the final act of *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*.

\*\*\*

There are other Moriartys, but none so delectably dangerous as was that of Henry Daniell.

—Basil Rathbone

Rathbone's is a minority view. Though Daniell, whose genre fame rests squarely on his memorable turn as Dr. "Toddy" McFarlane in Val Lewton's *THE BODY SNATCHER* (1945), was second to none in his portrayals of "cold fish", he places third and last on the short list of Moriartys who menaced Rathbone. (For our purposes, this list includes neither Joseph Kearns, who sometimes played the Professor on the Rathbone/Bruce radio series, nor Thomas Gomez, who took the role in the ill-fated 1953 play *SHERLOCK HOLMES* by Rathbone's wife, Ouida.) Daniell's most conspicuous trait—his sub-zero chilliness—suits the character's reptilian qualities, but misses the passion which Moriarty brings to his villainy. In *THE WOMAN IN GREEN* (1945), the film in which Daniell took the role, the Napoleon of Crime seems little more than a casual, calculating businessman. (It may be argued that contrasting Daniell's insouciance with his vocation—which includes killing and dismembering young women—is the whole point, but it doesn't make for anything very exciting on screen.)

Preceding Daniell by three years, Lionel Atwill matched wits with Rathbone in *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE SECRET WEAPON*. (Shortly after completing the film, accused of perjury in a previous trial in which he'd been questioned about a Christmas orgy held in his home, Atwill was matching wits with the Los Angeles County Grand Jury.) In *The Hollywood Hissables* (Scarecrow, 1989), Gregory William Mank writes:

Of the three actors to play Moriarty in the Rathbone/Bruce series, Atwill was more loathsome than George Zucco (in Fox's 1939 *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*), more flamboyant than

Henry Daniell (in Universal's 1945 *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE WOMAN IN GREEN*).

Certainly Atwill is a treat in the role, and one would be hard pressed to choose between his portrayal and Zucco's. Minus his rakish mustache, with his eyes heavily lidded to achieve the proper reptilian veneer, Atwill looks closest to Conan Doyle's original—but the randy old barnstormer has the misfortune of gracing a vehicle which simply is not on the same level as *THE ADVENTURES*. Nor does Atwill's irrepressible hamminess wholly suit the character, though there's no denying that it's enormous fun to watch.

Zucco's performance has more than a slice of pork to it as well, but the actor was often better than Atwill at projecting a snobbish intellectualism, and overall his Moriarty is a subtler creation. Zucco's second scene with Frank

Dawson is a case in point. By way of disguise, Moriarty is divesting himself of his beard. While Dawes carefully shaves him, the Professor can't help but mock his mousy servant:

*Moriarty:* You'd like to let that razor slip, wouldn't you, Dawes?

*Dawes:* No, sir. By no means, sir.

*Moriarty:* You're a coward, Dawes. If you weren't a coward you'd have cut my throat long ago.

*Dawes:* I give you my word, sir, that thought never entered my mind, sir.

*Moriarty:* Then you're worse than a coward—you're a fool! It's unlikely that I shall be back tonight, Dawes, and you may as well take the evening off.

*Dawes:* Thank you, sir.

*Moriarty:* Thank you, Dawes.



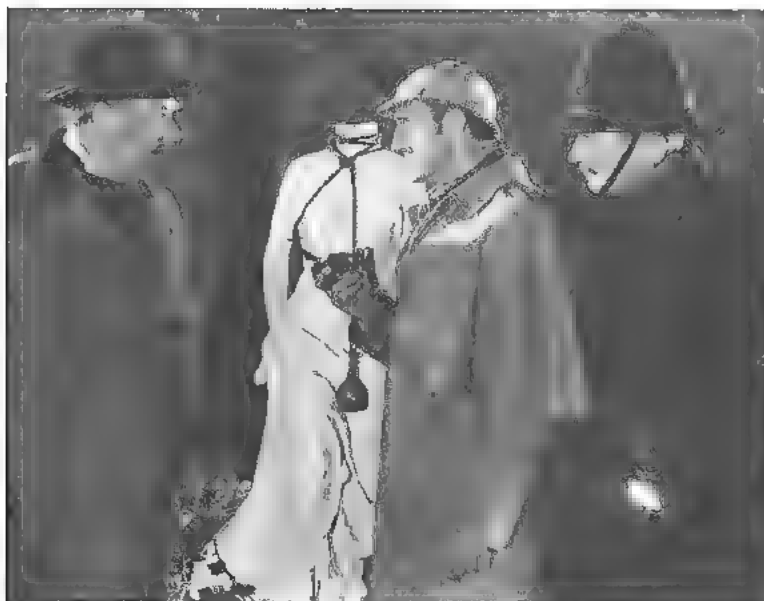
... at his lovely target.

Zucco imbues that final courtesy with a level of contempt that could easily have earned him a professorship at Harvard. Whereas Atwill might have given the line too much, and Daniell too little, Zucco strikes the perfect note.

Dismissing Dawes, Moriarty leaves his digs, climbs into Bassick's cab, and rides off to commit the crime of the century. (The first stop, at which the Professor and his blackguards waylay and replace the policemen assigned to guard the Star of Delhi, was deleted from the final print.)

Meanwhile, the garden party at the stately home of Lady Conyngham (Mary Forbes) is in full swing, with a music-hall comic (Holmes in disguise) and a South American gaucho band (headed, not by Xavier Cugat, but by Mateo) providing the pre-murder divertissement. Holmes makes his presence known to a nervous Ann, then vanishes into the night.

Simultaneously, Watson is defending his sometimes roommate to a properly vexed Sir Ronald Ramsgate. ("You're being too hard on Holmes, Sir Ronald. He sent me in his place.") Sergeant Bullfinch and his men arrive on the scene and (surprise!) the Cockney sergeant is really

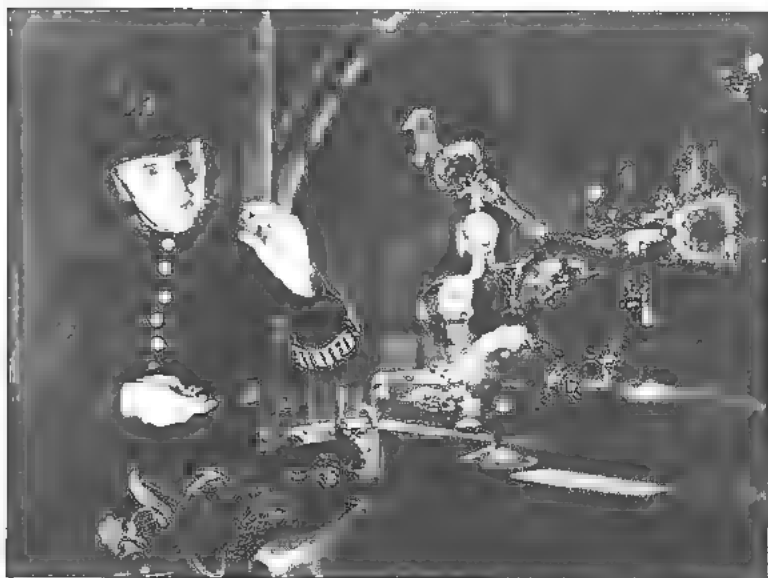


Holmes shows Watson and a constable the "fiendish instrument" used to strangle Lloyd Brandon.

Moriarty in the shaven flesh. Off they all march to receive the Star of Delhi from Captain Mannering (Montague Shaw) and his escorts. Then it's back to the Tower vault, where Sir Ronald unlocks a cage containing "the accumulated wealth of 10 centuries of English kings", the lights are suddenly doused, and the Star is stolen. Watson and Sir Ronald give chase, the good doctor finding the precious emerald on the Tower stairs, where it was presumably dropped by the thieves in their haste to escape. Congratulating Watson profusely, Sir Ronald returns to the vault, pops the Star in with the other gems, locks the door, and departs—leaving Moriarty, who has hidden in the cage, safely ensconced with the crown jewels of England.

We return to Lady Conyngham's, where the party is breaking up and Ann, at her hostess' urging, retires to a room for the night. The exhausted young woman sits at a dressing table and starts to remove her jewelry, when suddenly the air is filled with the number-one tune on her hit parade.

Meanwhile, Professor Moriarty pops a few of the crown jewels of England into a sack.



News comes via a footman (Brandon Hurst) that "a gentleman on the terrace" wishes to speak with Miss Brandon. Concluding erroneously that the gentleman's name is Sherlock, Ann rushes outside to find Hunter waiting. Ann refuses to believe that he has come for no purpose other than to ensure her safety; she backs away when Hunter attempts to take her in his arms.

*Ann:* Don't touch me! Don't touch me!

*Hunter:* Surely you're not afraid of me? You are afraid. That's how much all the years have counted. You think I want to hurt you. I don't know why I don't!

Her nerve understandably breaking, Ann runs terror-stricken onto the estate grounds. Hunter, having proven himself a whiz at comforting distraught women, starts after her, but doesn't get far thanks to Mateo, who knocks the solicitor cold.

There follows a strikingly composed chase sequence, with the clubfooted Mateo stalking Ann through the woods, Holmes (dressed at last in the classic cape and deerstalker) scouring the grounds with his trusty bull-eye's lantern, and the faithful Watson arriving on the scene with two bobbies. Cornering Ann in the garden, Mateo removes a *bolas* from around his waist and swings it high above his head, releasing the weapon just as the woman faints and Holmes pulls her out of harm's way. (The *bolas* wraps itself around a statue, severing the marble head.) Mateo tries to escape, but the detective shoots him. The threat to the last of the Brandons is vanquished, and all that remains (excepting Moriarty in the Tower of London) is a full explanation of the case.

We never get one.

\*\*\*

I would have spoken now had it not been for my dear girl. It would break her heart . . .

—"The Boscombe Valley Mystery"

After wounding Mateo and sending Ann off to recover in the house, Holmes shows Watson the murder weapon and questions the killer. We learn (as Holmes suspected) that Mateo's infirmity is far from genuine:

*Holmes:* This clubfooted shoe was a very clever device, but not quite clever enough, my friend. I'll wager you didn't think of it yourself. Who put you up to it?

*Mateo:* The Professor. He say he fix it so I no get caught.

The South American spits out his reply in a voice sounding like a cross between Bela Lugosi as Ygor and Carmen Miranda as Carmen Miranda and that is virtually the last thing we learn about the Brandon case in *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*.

Ah, but the original script! That's considerably more elaborate, and even features a final wrap-up in Inspector Bristol's office following the Tower battle with Moriarty. (More on that, presently.) We learn some crucial details of the master plot, including the fact that Moriarty never had to invent the bizarre circumstances of his second "toy" (the dirge, the albatross), but only to appropriate them:

*Continued on page 110*



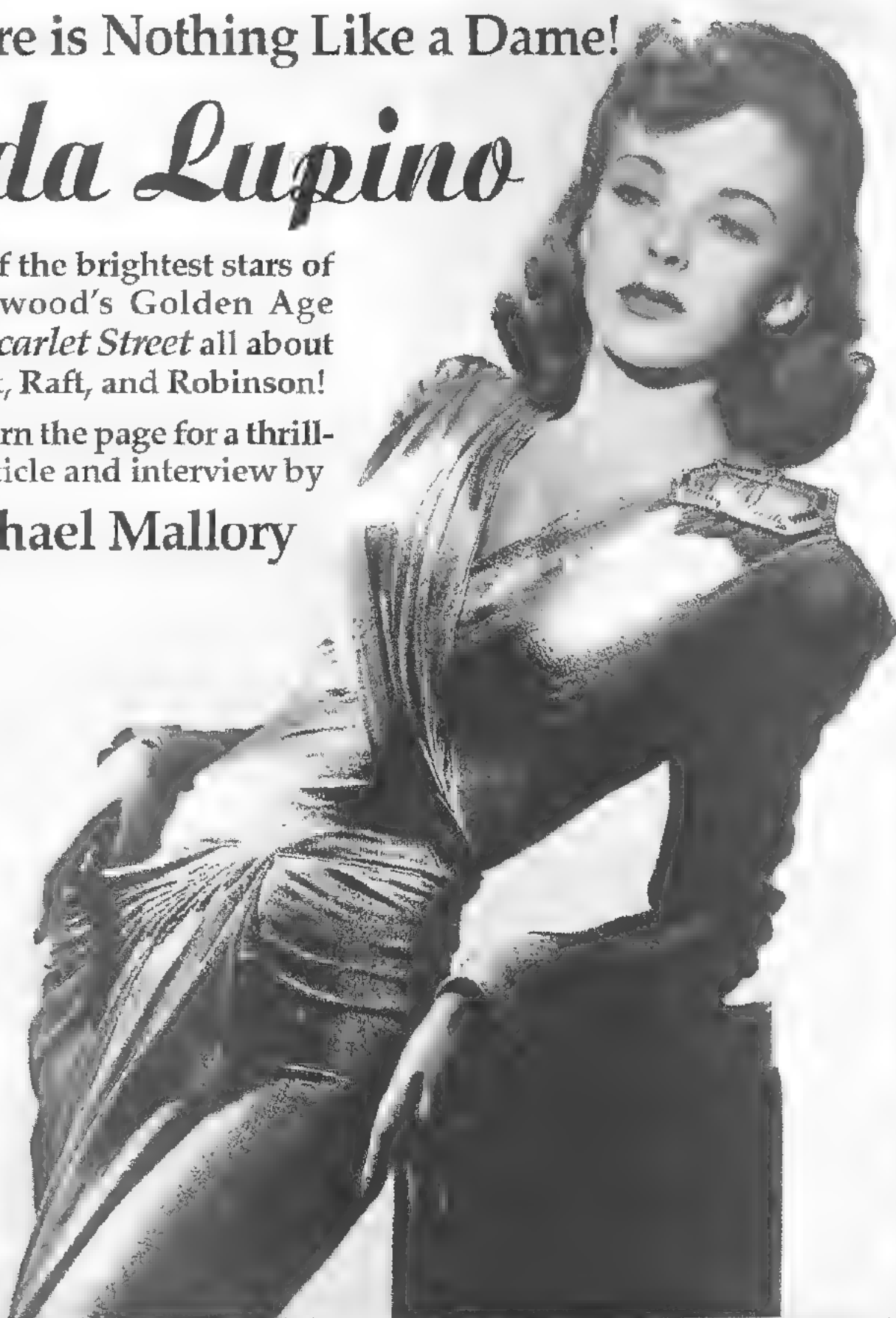
There is Nothing Like a Dame!

# Ida Lupino

One of the brightest stars of Hollywood's Golden Age tells *Scarlet Street* all about Bogart, Raft, and Robinson!

Just turn the page for a thrilling article and interview by

**Michael Mallory**





**O**f all the actresses of Hollywood's heyday who could be termed "great," Ida Lupino remains the least acknowledged. These days when the film industry speaks of her it is usually in regard to the fact that for two decades Lupino was the only woman director in Hollywood. No one would argue that recognition on that score is long overdue (least of all the director herself); however, it does serve to further overshadow her acting achievements.

Now fully retired from all her professions—acting, directing, producing, and screenwriting—Ida Lupino leads a somewhat reclusive life in the San Fernando Valley. But she keeps in touch with long-time friends, such as Olivia de Havilland, and is presently hard at work on an autobiography, appropriately titled *Ida Lupino by Ida Lupino*.

To say that Ms. Lupino rarely grants interviews is an understatement, though she was kind enough to take time from writing her memoirs to answer a few questions about her life and career exclusively for the readers of *Scarlet Street*.

\*\*\*

Although she has played everything from a French farce juvenile (*PARIS IN SPRING*, 1934) to a World War II jitterbug (*THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS*, 1943), Ida Lupino is best remembered as a dame. The kind of hard-baked cookie who steamed up the screen in *THEY DRIVE BY NIGHT* (1940), *ROAD HOUSE* (1948) and of course, *HIGH SIERRA* (1941). It's a persona she found close to home: "I loved playing sexy, warm dames who are tough against life, do not let life affect them—very much myself!" she says.

Born into a prominent theatrical family dating back to the Italian Renaissance, Ida Lupino's own entrance into the world was notably dramatic: she was born in London during an air raid on February 14, 1918 (some sources say 1914,

though February of that year is too early by several months for a WWI air raid . . . besides, Ida swears by 1918). Her father, Stanley Lupino, was a musical comedy star and her mother acted under the name Connie Emerald. The renowned slapstick comedian Lupino Lane was a cousin.

At the tender age of 11, Ida first stepped before the cameras as a five-dollar-a-day extra. Her first starring role came just a few years later, in the 1933 British picture *HER FIRST AFFAIRE*, directed by American Allan Dwan. It was a part for which Ida's mother, Connie Emerald, had originally tested. A quick string of British films followed: *MONEY FOR SPEED*, *HIGH FINANCE*, *THE GHOST CAMERA*, *I LIVED WITH YOU* and *PRINCE OF ARCADIA*. Then Hollywood summoned.

Paramount was looking for a young actress to play the title role in their 1933 all-star version of *ALICE IN WONDERLAND*. With the promise of a screen test, Ida Lupino set sail for the States on August 13th of that year. However, when studio executives saw the mature-looking teen who stepped off the boat, they realized they had erred. A screen test only confirmed that young Ida had more potential for Earl Carroll than Lewis Carroll, and the role of Alice ultimately went to Charlotte Henry.

The journey was not wasted, though; Ida Lupino was awarded a Paramount contract at \$600 a week. In her first film under contract, *SEARCH FOR BEAUTY* (1934), she played an Olympic champion opposite real Olympic



**ABOVE:** Ida Lupino in one of many glamour poses from her tenure at Paramount. **RIGHT:** Lupino was top-billed in *HIGH SIERRA* (1941), the film that made Bogie a star.

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**THEY DRIVE BY NIGHT** (1940) starred Ida Lupino (Right) with Ann Sheridan and George Raft. Humphrey Bogart was fourth-billed in this classic Warners melodrama.



It's often said that Lupino made Bogart a star in **HIGH SIERRA** (1941). Any man who had a woman love him that much must have had something going for him.



**PILLOW TO POST** (1945) was a frothy wartime comedy starring Ida Lupino, William Prince, and the jolly Fat Man himself: Sydney Greenstreet.

champion Buster Crabbe. After more contract fluff pieces, she landed a role in a more prestigious picture, **PETER IBBETSON** (1935), with Gary Cooper.

One of Ida's Hollywood chums around this time was Thelma Todd, a bubbly blonde comedienne who is the subject of one of movieland's greatest real-life mysteries. "Thelma Todd was a friend and a wonderful gal," Ida states. "She had a very rare gift; she was not in love with herself, like most actresses. Thelma was there for everyone." Unfortunately, one of the people Thelma was there for was the wrong kind of friend.

In December 1935, Thelma Todd was found in her car, inside its garage, dead of carbon monoxide poisoning. The question of whether it was accidental death, suicide, or murder has raged ever since. According to the biography *Hot Toddy* by Andy Edmonds (William Morrow & Co., 1989), Todd was last seen in public at a party thrown by the Lu pinos, shortly after which she was murdered, allegedly by her ex-boyfriend, gangster Lucky Luciano. "Lucky Luciano, a few of us thought so," Ida says today, adding, "I'm afraid she met a rotten finish!"

When her Paramount contract ran out, Ida began freelancing in pictures such as **ANYTHING GOES** (1936), the first movie version of the Cole Porter musical; **THE GAY DESPERADO** (1936); the action adventure **SEA DEVILS** (1937); **THE LADY AND THE MOB** (1939), Ida's first foray into gangster cinema; and **THE LONE WOLF SPY HUNT** (1939), a series programmer that mixed clues with screwball comedy. However, her most notable appearance in Hollywood's Golden Year was opposite the detective.

Fox's **THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1939) was a fast follow-up to **HOUD OF THE BASKERVILLES** (1939), and another chance to present the enormously successful team of Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce as the Baker Street duo.

The original story concerned Professor Moriarty's (George Zucco) plan to commit the Crime of the Century, ruining Holmes' reputation in the process. A very young, very British Ida Lupino played the daughter of a murdered man who also fears for her brother. In actuality, she is an unwitting cog in Moriarty's crime machine, used to distract Holmes from the theft of the Crown Jewels of England.

**THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** holds up extremely well today, both as a film and as Holmes. It contains Rathbone's best performance as the Great Detective (even if it does take him an incredibly long time to identify a drawing of an albatross) and Nigel Bruce keeps his bumbling sincere and endearing. Lupino imbues her frightened-heroine role with great inner strength—though scared and desperate, she seems anything but helpless. The scene in which she bursts into 221B, breathlessly asking Holmes for help, foreshadows Mary Astor's famous introduction in **THE MALTESE FALCON** (1941).

Ida had fun during the filming, too. "I thought he was great," she says of costar Basil Rathbone. "I used to call him 'Basil Bathrug' when he was deep in thought." She is more expressive regarding her Dr. Watson: "Nigel Bruce [was] a darling and a dear friend. We had fun, great fun." (One classic Hollywood story has it that Ida was invited to "get away" and recuperate from a bad cold at the Bruces' "country home"—which turned out to be one block away from her house in Beverly Hills.) As for George Zucco, she notes simply: "He could be frightening!"

The 1940s was Ida Lupino's decade, and a new contract with Warner Bros. placed her tough cookie character in with a mob of equally tough hombres. **THEY DRIVE BY NIGHT** (1940) costarred George Raft and Humphrey Bogart as



brother truckers. Of Raft, Ida says: "I got along well with him, he was great in what he was doing." The climax of the picture finds Raft's character about to take the rap for the murder of his boss, saved only when the boss's wife (Lupino) suddenly snaps and confesses to the crime. "Miss Lupino goes crazy about as well as it can be done," commented Bosley Crowther in the *New York Times*.

Ida was reunited with Bogart (in a star-making part rejected by George Raft, Paul Muni, James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson, and John Garfield) for *HIGH SIERRA* (1941). Playing a hard-shelled gun moll who falls for paroled killer "Mad Dog Earle", she received top billing and delivered a terse, smoldering performance poles apart from the genteel English heroine of the Holmes film. Stories about friction between the two performers continue to this day, but Ida pooh poohs them. "I can only tell you I loved Bogie, yes, and I think Bogie loved me—I think we could have been a going-going romance," she confides. "When I had to cry over his dead body at the end of the picture, I could do it." As for Bogart's acting style, Ida says: "Real, real every moment. I used to tease him: 'Are you sure you do not want to break my arm?'"

She likewise punctures the story that she nixed Bogart's casting in her next picture, 1941's *OUT OF THE FOG*: "Completely untrue, completely untrue. I did want Bogie cast in *OUT OF THE FOG*. I had no fight with him." However, John Garfield ended up with the gangster role in that picture.

*THE SEA WOLF* (1941), based on the classic Jack London novel, found Ida Lupino asea with the sadistic Captain Wolf Larsen (Edward G. Robinson). "I found him the toughest one of the lot," Ida says of Robinson. "We did not have any warm feelings. When we worked together [it was] easy for us to hate each other, and we continued this way!" Her final picture for 1941 (busy year!) was *LADIES IN RETIREMENT*, a Gothic melodrama which cast the 23-year-old in a role played on stage by middle-aged Flora Robson. She nonetheless got high marks from the critics for holding together the slow-moving house of cards.

Like many other stars in Hollywood, Ida Lupino contributed to the war effort by donating her time and talents. *FOREVER AND A DAY* (1942) was the product of seven directors, 21 writers, and 80 stars, mostly British, all working for free to benefit World War II charities funds. (In



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**LEFT: WOMEN'S PRISON (1955)** starred Ida Lupino with then-husband Howard Duff. As its title suggests, the film was responsible for an entire subgenre of tough broads and vicious matrons. **RIGHT: Fritz Lang's WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS (1956)** again costarred Lupino with Duff, and featured in its star-studded cast the late, great Vincent Price.

America, the proceeds went to the National Foundation for Infant Paralysis.) Ida appeared as a maid in the third of seven episodes.

Moviegoers got to see a trace of unsuspected musical ability in *THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS* (1943), another all-star wartime extravaganza in which Ida and pal Olivia de Havilland performed a boogie-woogie number. That same year she played Emily Bronte to de Havilland's Charlotte in *DEVOTION*, though the film was not released until 1946.

Among film writers, there is sometimes a tendency to categorize Ida Lupino as the studio's second-string Bette Davis, but the lady herself sees it differently. "Warners were picking out the most difficult roles for me to play, and the more difficult they became, the more I liked them." As for having to fight for a role, she declares: "Competition from another actress, no!"

The East Coast press even began to champion the actress when she appeared in a less-than-stellar contract commitment. "It's just too bad that Ida Lupino, whose talents are far above such trash, had to be stuck with the necessity of trying to make something of it," proclaimed the formidable (and rarely generous) Bosley Crowther in his *New York Times* review of the comedy *PILLOW TO POST* (1945).

The musical talent just hinted at in *THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS* and two early musicals for Paramount was finally revealed in *THE MAN I LOVE* (1947) and *ROAD HOUSE* (1948). (Most fans never got to hear her symphonic composition, "The Aladdin Suite", performed by the L.A. Philharmonic!) In the former, Ida torched her way through "Bill", "Body and Soul", "Why Was I Born", and the title song, while romancing gangster Robert Alda. She made an even bigger impression as the chain-smoking Chicago chanteuse in *ROAD HOUSE*. "My musical talent was not used at all in Hollywood except by Fox in *ROAD HOUSE*," laments Ida. "When I went to night clubs, people would ask me to sing the numbers that I performed in *ROAD HOUSE*."

The picture, which she reportedly chose after reading over 50 scripts and 20 novels, contains the quintessential Ida Lupino performance: sexy, smart, funny, tough yet vulnerable. Her renditions of "One More For the Road", "The Right Kind", and "Again" are sung in a smoky, husky

voice that seethes with past emotion and experience. For these numbers, Ida accompanied herself on the piano.

On June 25, 1948, after years of playing tough American dames, the English actress became an American citizen. Not long after that, Ida Lupino became her own boss, forming Emerald Productions with then-husband Collier Young. The first picture that she produced was *NOT WANTED* (1949), a low-budget drama dealing with the rather daring topic of unwanted pregnancy. Ida also cowrote the screenplay and took over the direction when the credited director, Elmer Clifton, became ill. Other pictures from Ida's company—re-named *Filmakers, Inc.*—were built around equally daring social issues, such as rape (*OUTRAGE*, 1950) and bigamy (*THE BIGAMIST*, 1953).

The 1950s brought a new aspect to Ida Lupino's screen persona: Ida as victim. *WOMAN IN HIDING* (1950) cast her as a frantic wife who knows her husband is plotting to get her out of the way by (plan A) killing her or (plan B) committing her. *BEWARE MY LOVELY* (1952), despite the Raymond Chandleresque title, is a period melodrama in which kind widow Ida is terrorized by certified psycho Robert Ryan. This tense film is built around a complex duel between Lupino, alternately sympathetic and terrified, and Ryan, swinging deftly back and forth from Lennylike gentleness to full-out homicidal mania. She and Ryan were teamed once again for *ON DANGEROUS GROUND* (1952), which found Ida as a blind woman who breaks through the shell of hard-boiled cop Ryan. Ida also codirected (uncredited) with Nicholas Ray.

The steely glint was back in her eye for *WOMEN'S PRISON* (1955), which cast Ida as a sadistic prison matron, and created, for better or worse, an entire subgenre of pictures. Her last major film of the decade was the crime thriller *WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS* (1956), directed by the legendary Fritz Lang. Today, just the mention of Herr Lang's name draws a laugh from the actress. "Well, I felt rather distant to him; my attitude was distant," she says. "He was not one of my favorites." The film, depicting the manhunt of a mad killer, is greeted with equal distance by Lang aficionados.

Television became Ida Lupino's mainstay for the remainder of her career. She was one of the regular stars of the



anthology series **FOUR STAR PLAYHOUSE** (1952–1956) and had a sitcom, with then-husband Howard Duff, called **MR. ADAMS AND EVE** (1957). She played guest roles on many other series including **TWILIGHT ZONE**, **BATMAN** (as the nasty Dr. Cassandra, with Duff appearing as her henchman, Cabala), and a bizarre segment of **THE WILD, WILD WEST** titled **THE NIGHT OF THE BIG BLAST**, which cast Ida as Dr. Faustina, a kind of female Dr. Frankenstein. As busy as she was acting on television, she was even busier behind the camera, directing nearly 70 episodes of **HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL** alone, in addition to **ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS**, **THRILLER**, **TWILIGHT ZONE** and (scariest of all) **GILLIGAN'S ISLAND**.

By the 70s, Ida Lupino had stopped directing to concentrate on acting in TV movies such as **THE STRANGERS IN 7-A** (1972) and **I LOVE A MYSTERY** (aired in 1973, but shot six years earlier), and series, including **MOD SQUAD**, **COLUMBO**, and **ELLERY QUEEN**. Feature appearances were rarer, though she scored as the mother of Steve McQueen in Sam Peckinpah's **JUNIOR BONNER** (1972).

For her final two feature films, Ida veered into new territory, to say the least. "I rather enjoyed making **FOOD OF THE GODS** and **THE DEVIL'S RAIN**; I thought they would be a step up for me or ruin me!" the actress says with a laugh.

In **THE DEVIL'S RAIN** (1975), a very strange film from the very strange director Robert Fuest, she plays the doomed matriarch of a devil-fighting family in the modern West. Her soul stolen early on by Satan, Ida spends most of the picture in ghastly makeup before melting in an even ghastlier finish (yes, that's really her under all the goo). In one of the picture's better scares, her wizened, eyeless form suddenly pops up in the back seat of a speeding car, causing the heroine to crash.

Filmed in Mexico, **THE DEVIL'S RAIN** offered a unique cast that included Ernest Borgnine (as Satan), Eddie Albert, Keenan Wynn, Tom Skeritt, and William Shatner (as Ida's sons!), **HEE HAW**'s Lisa Todd, and young John Travolta, in his first film. Real-life Satanists Anton and Diane LaVey even turned up in bits. Far from ruining her, **THE DEVIL'S RAIN** garnered Ida an Anne Radcliffe Award for best actress from the Count Dracula Society.

**FOOD OF THE GODS** (1976), a better-than-usual Bert I. Gordon opus based on the H. G. Wells novel, pitted Ida against a gigantic mutant worm, wasp, and rat. "Howard



Ida Lupino in 1975's **THE DEVIL'S RAIN**, possibly John Travolta's greatest motion picture triumph.

Duff should have been cast as the rat," she cracks—"type-casting!"

Ida's last appearance before the cameras was in an episode of **CHARLIE'S ANGELS** in 1977. Despite decades of consistently fine, seemingly effortless, often picture-saving performances, Ida Lupino never received Academy recognition, not even a nomination. It might have been that effortless quality that worked against her, since the best way to nab an acting award has always been to really let the sweat show. Still, film buffs have long realized what Oscar seems to have overlooked: There is nothing like a dame!



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The Boy Who Knew Sherlock Holmes

*Terry Kilburn*

Interviewed by Kris Marentette

Born in London on November 25, 1926, Terence "Terry" Kilburn is perhaps best known for his role of Tiny Tim in Metro Goldwyn Mayer's 1938 production of *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*. Fans of 50s horror movies remember him as hero Marshall Thompson's pal in 1957's *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE*. Kilburn himself places 1939's *GOODBYE, MR. CHIPS* on the top of his list. Still, in a career that has included such films as *SWEETHEARTS* (1938), *ANDY HARDY GETS SPRING FEVER* (1939), *THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON* (1940), *A YANK AT ETON* (1942), *NATIONAL VELVET* (1944), *BLACK BEAUTY* (1946), *SONG OF SCHEHERAZADE* (1947), *THE FAN* (1949), *THE FORTUNES OF CAPTAIN BLOOD* (1950), *ONLY THE VALIANT* (1951), and *SLAVES OF BABYLON* (1953)—plus two turns assisting a certain well-known detective in *BULLDOG DRUMMOND AT BAY* and *BULLDOG DRUMMOND STRIKES BACK* (both 1947)—the actor turned Detroit director is, for a select group of movie and mystery maniacs, forever ever associated with another detective altogether. *Scarlet Street* is proud to present an exclusive interview with "the boy in buttons" . . .

*Scarlet Street: How did a young man like you, born in England, arrive in Hollywood at the age of 13 to become a movie star?*

**Terry Kilburn:** Well, actually, I was younger than that when I made my first movie. I was 10.

**SS: What film was that?**

**TK:** It was a film called *LORD JEFF*. It was called *BOY FROM BERNARDO* in England. I was "discovered", so to speak. In those days, they used to have amateur nights at the movie houses, and they used to have one week where they'd have adults and another week where they'd have children. I used to impersonate movie stars. (Laughs) I went on to those amateur contests and I won a lot. I was spotted—they used to have scouts in those days, what they called talent scouts—and that led to my coming all the way from England to Hollywood. Quite a romance!

**SS: Did you find it difficult with acting and schooling at the same time?**

**TK:** No, they used to have required schooling. It was a three-hour school period, but you had pretty much private tutoring, so you got an intensive schooling. They used to have schools on the sets and then, between movies, the children who were under contract to the studio went to the studio's school. The MGM school was really quite famous.

**SS: You appeared opposite Basil Rathbone in *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. When did you first meet him?**

**TK:** I first met Mr. Rathbone when I worked on that film, I think. I don't think I'd ever met him before.

**SS: The film is considered by many to be the best Holmes film ever made, even better than its predecessor, *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*.**

**TK:** Well, *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* was such a success, I guess, that they decided to make the series. It was made at 20th Century Fox on the back lot. The scenes that I was in were shot right in the studio. I was what they called loaned from

MGM to Fox. They wanted me to play the part of Billy. Billy, I guess, is sort of a running character in the Sherlock Holmes stories, and I think the original idea was that I was going to be in quite a few of them. But that was the last of those Sherlock Holmes movies; there was a sort of hiatus, and when they made the others I don't think Billy ever appeared.

**SS: That was when Universal took over the series. Now, Darryl F. Zanuck was the head of 20th Century Fox . . .**

**TK:** Darryl Zanuck was like all of those figures in those days; he was sort of next to God, so one didn't see him very much. (Laughs) I met him a couple of times, and I remember him as being very suntanned, with a big cigar and quite pleasant. He was nice to me, a little kid, but I don't remember him. I certainly didn't know him.

**SS: Did you find Basil Rathbone to be helpful to a young actor such as yourself?**

**TK:** Well, actually, I got to know Basil much more later on, some years later when we did a stage version of *SHERLOCK HOLMES*. That's when I really got to know him, because by that time I was grown up. As a child, of course, I didn't really get to know him except to see that he was a great gentleman and an extremely pleasant person. Everybody liked him very much. Of course, in those days, he was more famous for playing villains, and he couldn't have been more different. He was a gentle and really very charming man, and he was indeed very, very well liked by everybody.

**SS: What do you remember about George Zucco, who played Professor Moriarty?**

**TK:** Oddly enough, I was in several films with him, but we never were in the same sequences.

**SS: How about Nigel Bruce?**

**TK:** Oh, he was exactly the way he seemed! (Laughs) He was just the same offstage as he was on, and just a delight. I do remember one thing: While Ida Lupino was making *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, she was testing for a

part in a film with Ronald Colman, called *THE LIGHT THAT FAILED*. A lot of young actresses wanted this part; it was the part of a cocky, slatterny kind of a girl. It was a very showy part. I remember Basil Rathbone saying to Nigel Bruce, "Did you hear that our little Ida got the part?" They were both so delighted that she'd gotten this wonderful part. They felt that it was going to make her a star, and it did make her a star. Other than that, I don't really remember. I had so little to do in the film that I think I was finished in a couple of days. The next time that I came into contact with Basil Rathbone was when they did a Sherlock Holmes series on the radio.

**SS: How many of those did you do?**

**TK:** Gosh, I don't remember, but I did several. I started working in radio after I finished high school; I was doing quite a lot of radio work. I remember going in—by that time, of course, I wasn't a little boy any more—and neither Basil Rathbone nor Nigel Bruce recognized me! (Laughs) I didn't bother telling them who I was. Then, some time later, in 1953, *SHERLOCK HOLMES* was made into a play, and I'm afraid to say that it was a rather bad play.

**SS: What was wrong with it? Rathbone's wife, Ouida, who wrote it, took many elements from the original stories . . .**

**TK:** Well, she really wasn't a very good writer. Everybody can't just sit down and write a play. I think there's a certain knack to it.

**SS: Did you meet her?**

**TK:** Oh, yes! Yes, indeed.

**SS: She must have spent quite a lot of time at rehearsals.**

**TK:** Yes, she was very much in evidence.

**SS: Do you think one of the reasons the play didn't go over was that Nigel Bruce wasn't there to play Watson?**

**TK:** No. I don't think so, although I think that would have helped. It simply wasn't a very interesting play. By this time I was completely grown up,





so I remember it all very well. Again, when I went out to audition for it, they didn't remember my having been in the movie at all. I thought that was probably just as well, because I wanted them to think of me as I was then rather than as I had been. I didn't say a word, but it was odd that they didn't remember. Of course, they had made so many other movies by then that they wouldn't, necessarily.

**SS:** Those who know you from your early films have a hard time picturing you grown up.

**TK:** Yes, I'm certainly grown up! (Laughs) Now, the play was quite an interesting experience. I remember that I went out to audition at the home that the Rathbones were renting out on the Huntingdon Palisades, a very palatial home. They always lived in great style. She was a sort of social leader and apparently spent every penny that Basil ever made! That's why he was always in need of money, because she was so extravagant. They'd throw huge and really lavish parties. They auditioned me for this part. It was one scene, but it was a very flashy scene. I had a hysterical breakdown, and I just threw myself into it, body and soul, and they cast me right then and there. They were really very nice to me, always. But when I read the script I remember thinking, "Oh, my god, this is just really . . ."

**SS:** You had a kind of gut feeling?

**TK:** Well, I think everybody except Basil did.

**SS:** He and his wife both worked very hard putting it together.

*Kris Marentette, his wife, and two young children live in Kanata, Ontario, Canada. He is an avid collector of Hollywood memorabilia.*

**TK:** It was very sad. They had a lot of their own money in it, I believe, and they decided to produce it in a real old-fashioned way, with big sets. They thought that that would be what would appeal to an audience, that it would either be a big hit and work, or it would simply have to close immediately. I think that's what most of the people in the cast felt would happen—and that's what did happen. We had a dress rehearsal in Boston that made some kind of minor history at the time. We started at 8:00 in the evening and went on until 8:00 the next morning. There were so



many mistakes and the sets were so immense!

**SS:** They must have had trouble right from the very beginning

**TK:** Oh, yes, terrible troubles. There were other companies trying plays out in Boston at that time; they used to always go out of town before opening plays in New York, more than they do nowadays. THE TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON company was there, and the play of SABRINA FAIR was playing at the time, and it began to get around town to the various restaurants where the actors went after their shows that this bizarre rehearsal was going on. At about two in the morning, all these Orientals from TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON wandered in to watch our rehearsal.

**SS:** What were some of the problems faced by the cast?

**TK:** For instance, while my scene was taking place on a small set, on a wagon in back of my scene, an immense set of the waterfalls where Moriarty and Holmes fight was being put into place. This was quite a spectacular set with a projection, which was quite uncommon in those days. It was very, very

expensive and, of course, very complicated. All I could hear all the time that I was doing my scene was the stagehands in back of me bumping and hitting their shins and saying, "Oh, my god, watch out! Watch out!"—yet I had to go on doing my scene. (Laughs) Then, when we finally got into New York, it played just three performances.

**SS:** What a shame!

**TK:** Mr. Rathbone had always been extremely complimentary to me in my scene; he felt that I was wonderful and, actually, the scene wasn't. It was one of those scenes that really was very easy to do, because it was hysterics, but for some reason he seemed to be very impressed, and he would always make me take a solo call at the end of the play. In the last performance, during my scene, something went wrong with the lights, and they never came on. I had to play the entire scene in the dark! (Laughs) Afterwards, in the intermission, Basil—and remember, he's the star of the thing—made it his business to come find me. He said, "Oh, my dear boy, I'm so sorry," and I really was quite startled. We knew it was the closing performance, but this is what I mean by how kind he was. He said, "It just broke my heart when that happened," and I said, "Well, please, those things happen and I had to carry on." He said, "Believe me, I'm going to remark on it." I thought to myself, "Well, please don't do that." The people in the audience did not like the play, and my scene was in the first act, and I was sure that by the end of the play they'd forgotten who I was, anyway. But sure enough, at the end of the play, he stopped the applause and said, "This is our final performance, and I'm not going to make any speech apologizing for anything or doing a post-mortem on the play. I just want to remark upon the unfortunate circumstance when the lights didn't go on in that scene, and this young actor who's been"—I can't remember all of the words, but I do remember that he said "gaining vociferous applause". I always remember that word, "vociferous". He made me stand up to take a separate bow, which really was terribly, terribly nice of him. It was inappropriate, really, and a little foolish, but very nice. After that, he and Ouida called me a number of times to tell me about jobs and parts that they'd heard were being cast. They said, "Be sure to let us know if there's anything we can do to help you." Very generous, extremely kind people, but I never actually had anything to do with them after that.

PREVIOUS PAGE, TOP: The Boy Actor. PREVIOUS PAGE, MIDDLE: Terry Kilburn and Reginald Owen (as miserly old Ebenezer Scrooge) in MGM's *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* (1938). RIGHT: Terry Kilburn, forever remembered as Tiny Tim.

SS: How would you compare Jack Rain, who played Watson in *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, to Nigel Bruce in the role?

TK: Oh, well, Jack Rain was very different. He was more sophisticated. You know, I don't really know the stories. I don't think I've ever read a Sherlock Holmes story. People said at the time that Jack Rain was really more the way Watson was in the stories.

SS: Nigel Bruce played him as a hearty, blustery character.

TK: Nigel Bruce was so endearing, so colorful and so funny that I think he really was very much more entertaining than Jack Rain. He was in a lot of films. He always, always played the same kind of character. Sometimes it was played for poignancy, sometimes for comedy, but it was essentially the same character. (Laughs) But he was just like that offstage—not quite so fuddy-duddy. They were all of the generation that are gentleman actors, but they had a lot of fun, too. They were very humorous and Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, both, were leaders in the British colony in Hollywood. They had the cricket team with C. Aubrey Smith, Clive Brook, and people like that. It was England away from England. That about covers my contact with Basil Rathbone.

SS: What is your personal favorite of the films you made?

TK: The greatest film that I was ever in was *GOODBYE, MR. CHIPS*. That was, in its day, a very important film because of Robert Donat's extraordinary performance. It really became a classic, and it's only in the last 10 years or so that one doesn't hear it mentioned along with other great films. For many, many years it was considered by many people one of the 10 best. It was made just before the war, in 1939, and I was sent back to England. My parents came with me.

SS: Your parents came to Hollywood with you, didn't they?

TK: Oh, yes. They loved every minute of it.

SS: Was it a dream of yours to be in films?

TK: Yes, but it didn't seem any more than a childish fantasy. That it could come true is quite extraordinary!

SS: *LOLITA* was one of your last films.

TK: I guess that was the last. By that time, I had stopped acting, but I was asked by Stanley Kubrick, whom I had





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**LEFT:** Terry Kilburn starred with Basil Rathbone in *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, an unsuccessful play written by Rathbone's wife, Ouida. **RIGHT:** Kilburn blows the brains out of some brains in 1958's *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE*.

actually met earlier in Hollywood through a friend of mine. It turned out that he was in England making a film and I had just, in London, directed a production of *INHERIT THE WIND* that had made quite a success.

**SS:** Did you have a big part in *LOLITA*?

**TK:** No. I was not really acting. He called and said that he remembered knowing me in Hollywood and had just seen the play in London and thought that, having been directing over there for some time and having done mostly American plays, I must be in contact with English actors who could do convincing American accents.

**SS:** You're a full-time director and theater administrator, now. What kind of plays do you put on at the Meadowbrook Theatre?

**TK:** Well, we do a variety of plays. We literally run the gamut from Shakespeare to Agatha Christie to musicals. We do *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*....

**SS:** Then you can give special direction to *Tiny Tim*, right?

**TK:** I didn't even direct it last year! (Laughs) That film often plays at Christmas time. It's a lovely Christmas card, a romantic version. It's the one that most people pick. Actually, I've never seen the Alastair Sim one, which I understand is closer to the actual book. I certainly loved doing the MGM version. It was directed by a very sweet, kind man who died just a few years later, very young: Edward Maran. Most of the people in it have died by now, but June Lockhart—she

was one of the Cratchett children—is still alive, as are most of the kids, you know, the young people. Reginald Owen actually lived to be 92 and was working right up until the time he died. Wonderful. Gene Lockhart, who was a wonderful character actor, died some years ago. So it's a little sad and nostalgic seeing it—but I enjoy seeing it. The one I'd really like to see is the first one, *LORD JEFF*. I have never seen that since, and I was a child when we did it.

**SS:** Why did you stop acting?

**TK:** I got more interested in directing and I got kind of fed up with the acting profession. I've always loved acting

*Continued on page 111*

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by Michael Brunas

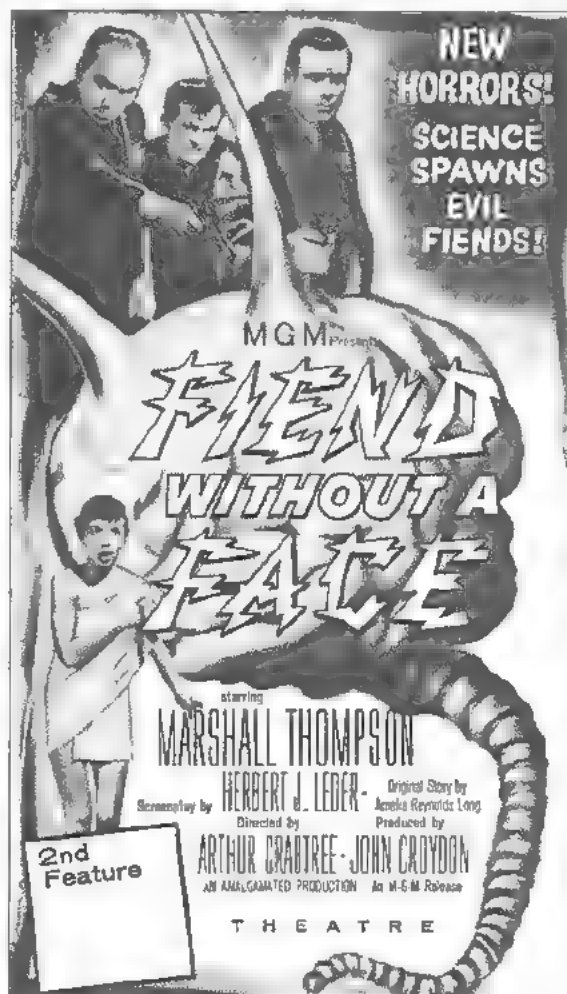
In the glut of movies released in Hollywood's first science-fiction decade, the 1950s, the genre films that stand out from the pack fall roughly into three classifications. There are the truly artistic and visionary works (1951's *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL*), the special-effects vehicles (1953's *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS* and anything else by Ray Harryhausen) and those films marked with the postadolescent, hard-driving energy that defined the Hollywood drive-in style (American International at their most typical, for instance, 1957's *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF*). The British-made *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* doesn't quite fall into any of these categories, although special-effects-wise it's more smoothly executed than most. The picture's real hook is its incredibly gory story line, which makes it a minor cult item to this day. Released at a time when radioactive behemoths and teenage monstrosities ran rampant, *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* has creatures who went beyond the ken of the Hollywood dream factory: invisible, living human brains, which wrapped themselves boalike around their victim's neck, literally sucking out their brains.

Such stomach-turning plot inventions probably wouldn't give modern, desensitized audiences much of a stir, but the carnage of *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* could only be described as heavy-duty to 1958 moviegoers. The film not

only exploited the nuclear fears of the day (the creatures were, after all, atomic in origin), but also served as a signpost to the charnel-house sensibilities that wouldn't reach their apogee until more than a decade later. On a less conscious level, the film tapped into

the general mistrust of modern science that Hollywood had profitably exploited since its early adaptations of *Frankenstein* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

The arrival of the Atomic Age brought this looming apprehension of science to soaring heights. With every step of scientific progress achieved, there seemed to be a score of fast-buck Hollywood producers committing their own dizzying fantasies to film, usually mangling facts as well as logic in the process. The imagined glories of atomic power were offset with silver-screen images of gargantuan insects and shrinking men. As reports of UFOs crept into the headlines, Hollywood probed the possibility of death-rays and full-scale invasions. In short, Hollywood, in typically comic-book fashion, was painting science as mankind's enemy rather than its savior and often casting a wary eye on intellectuals of any kind. (Howard Hawks' 1951 *THE THING* seemed less about Earth's fending off an alien race of blood-sucking human vegetables than it was about a war of values between the American military and the super-intellectual elite of a scientific expedition.)







LEFT: People are having their brains sucked out and it isn't even an election year! RIGHT: Stanley Maxted, Marshall Thompson, Kim Parker, and Terence Kilburn question Kynaston Reeves. (Say, wasn't he in those Bill and Ted movies?)

FIEND WITHOUT A FACE developed the theme and, as if determined to be the last word on the subject, carried it to its most literal extremes: now "super brains", engineered by another misguided apostle of science, were literally devouring the brains of the rest of us. The movie takes its rightful place alongside several other matter-of-fact black-and-white 50s British science-fiction films that tried to duplicate the formula of Val Guest's memorable pair of Quatermass features, *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN* (1956) and *ENEMY FROM SPACE* (1957)—which, although they were adapted from Nigel Kneale's BBC television plays, actually owe a stylistic debt to the Boulting Brothers' documentary-like 1950 thriller *SEVEN DAYS TO NOON*.

Based on an early-30s sci-fi story, "The Thought Monster" by *Weird Tales* writer Amelia Reynolds Long, Herbert Leder's screenplay for *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* brings the story up to date, complete with all of the standard Cold War trappings. The setting is an American Air Force base near Manitoba, Canada. An atomic-powered antimissile defense system is being developed amid a clamor of disapproval from local farmers, who fret that the supersonic aircraft are having an unnerving effect on their livestock.

No other 50s sci-fi flick sucks quite so much—or, for that matter, quite so legitimately—as 1958's *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE*. Here, Launce Maraschal sings a quick chorus of "If I only Had a Brain."



58 SCARLET STREET



Events take a grim turn, as the townspeople are being found with their brains and spinal tissue literally torn from their bodies. When the villagers conclude that the air base is harboring a demented GI, a posse is organized to comb the area. The search turns up nothing, although one of the men who returns has been reduced to a babbling lunatic. Was he shocked into this state, or was his brain partially devoured by one of the creatures? The writers aren't telling.

When the mayor is found dead, Major Jeff Cummings (Marshall Thompson) sets out to prove that the so-called mental vampires have more of a basis in scientific reality than in peasant superstition. The prime suspect is Professor Walgate (Kynaston Reeves), a psychic authority who, Cummings learns, is actually a nuclear physicist.

In the inevitable showdown, the benevolent professor confesses that his experiments in psychic phenomena were short-circuited by the lack of an adequate power supply. Using his apparatus to siphon atomic power from the air base's reactors, he was able to create living, invisible organisms by sheer force of will. Escaping from the laboratory, the fiends went on a killing spree, presumably increasing their intelligence by ingesting the brains of their victims.

The murdering brains descend upon the atomic generator on the air base, killing everyone in sight in order to increase their life-sustaining energy supply. The resultant power surge renders the creatures visible at last, and Jeff and his team find themselves trapped in the professor's cottage surrounded by their hungry adversaries. (The fiends turn out to be nothing more than normal-sized human brains, complete with prehensile spinal cords. Topped off with two tiny feeler rods and membrane-thin appendages at their sides, they are able to crawl snaillike on any surface and to propel themselves like cannonballs when stalking their victims.)

Jeff sets off to dynamite the generator while the guilt-stricken Walgate, acting as a decoy, falls victim to his own creations. As the occupants of the house are faced with a full-scale onslaught of the deadly creatures, Jeff blows up the power station and the fiends disintegrate into gloppy pools of putrescence.

Leder clearly planned a slow build-up for *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE*, but director Arthur Crabtree occasionally lets the film slip into tedium. The on-screen killings by the invisible creatures are effective, even startling, and the fiends' "unsightliness" had the added benefit of keeping the costly animation effects to a minimum. The



LEFT: Captain Chester (Terence Kilburn) and Barbara Griselle (Kim Parker) try to arouse hero Jeff Cummings (Marshall Thompson), who knows better. RIGHT: A little-known dance craze of the 50s, performed without brains.



climactic scenes, probably among the most harrowing of any science-fiction film of its vintage, go a long way toward redeeming the sluggish first half and remain the movie's best-remembered moments. Almost a precursor to 1968's *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*, the nail-biting finale finds Cummings and company barricading themselves in a remote and unfortified country house, trying to keep a horde of marauding creatures at bay. The battle is well-staged, as the creatures use their antennaelike stalks to pry loose the hastily erected wooden planks meant to keep them out. At last gaining a foothold, the fiends flock into the house in a feeding frenzy directed mostly against disposable minor players, who come to a gurgling end as their brains are wrenched from their skulls.

Although the grand finale has given the film whatever notoriety it enjoys, director Crabtree can claim none of the credit. If we are to believe producer John Croydon, whose account of the filming was published in an early issue of *Fangoria*, he personally took over the directorial reins when the befuddled Crabtree confessed that he could make little sense of special-effects-man K. L. Ruppell's conception of how the scene should be staged.

How does the rest of the movie stack up? Not very well, actually. The term "creakiness" has for years been bandied about to describe early talkies (typically some Mascot "old dark house" potboiler with Jack LaRue), and it's slowly catching up to the 50s. Much of the movie dawdles until the well-turned shock scenes and that's a heck of a lot of padding. Soldiers peer studiously into radar screens, villagers bicker interminably, and the romantic leads (Marshall Thompson and Kim Parker) eye each other in a mutual, unspoken attraction.

Science-fiction-movie veteran Thompson is again the typical 50s military hero, as clean-cut, square-jawed and colorless as needed. Parker's character is somewhat less clichéd, although she's not much of an actress. Terence Kilburn is Captain Chester, the ever-fawning underling to Thompson who is saddled with the sort of dialogue they used to hand Spencer Tracy when he was still second banana to Clark Gable: "I know that guy. If anyone can make it out of here, he could!" Kilburn assures Parker.

Despite its gruesome premise, *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* can't be accused of being graphically explicit, deriving most of its shock value from unnerving, bone-chomping sound effects and the virtuoso contortions of the players. (British censors ordered minor cuts and the film

was banned outright in Ireland). The stop-motion special effects, although hardly of the caliber of the best Hollywood animators, are quite expertly handled by the obscure German special-effects team of Florenz von Nordhoff and K. L. Ruppell.

The movie has quite a bit in common with a trio of English-made thrillers by its uncredited coproducer, Richard Gordon. Though one can't make a case for Mr. Gordon as the auteur behind *FIRST MAN INTO SPACE* (1959), *THE HAUNTED STRANGLER* (1958), and *CORRIDORS OF BLOOD* (1963), all three movies follow a prescribed formula: basically a sober, somewhat talky plot development interrupted by a jolt of stark, unexpected violence. A case in point, *FIRST MAN INTO SPACE* starts off in a staid, pseudodocumentary style, and then abruptly and pretty darn effectively shifts gears, becoming a fairly potent monster-on-the-loose thriller. Likewise, *THE HAUNTED STRANGLER* contains horror scenes quite strong for its day. In one of his best latter-day performances, Boris Karloff plays a character who's Jekyll/Hyde with a little Jack the Ripper thrown in, venting his murderous fury on English music-hall girls.

For all its ups and downs, *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE* remains a decent and almost unique 74 minutes of science-fiction entertainment of its period. It would be unfair to dismiss it as a one-scene wonder, but self-respecting horror fans should be advised to miss the last reel only at their own peril.



#### FIEND WITHOUT A FACE

##### Credits

1958, an Amalgamated Production. An M-G-M Release. Director: Arthur Crabtree. Producer: John Croydon. Screenplay: Herbert J. Leder. Original Story: Amelia Reynolds Long. Running time: 74 minutes.

##### Cast

Marshall Thompson (Jeff Cummings), Terence Kilburn (Captain Chester), Kim Parker (Barbara Griselle), Michael Balfour (Sergeant Kasper), Gil Winfield (Dr. Warren), Shane Cordell (Nurse), Stanley Maxted (Colonel Butler), James Dyrenforth (Mayor Hawkins), Kerrigan Prescott (Atomic Engineer), Kynaston Reeves (Professor Walgate), Peter Madden (Dr. Bradley), R. Meadows White (Ben Adams), Lola Lloyd (Amelia Adams), Robert MacKenzie (Gibbons), Launce Maraschal (Melville)

# Still Flying High BILL CAMPBELL

Interviewed by Steve Randisi

Bill Campbell is one of the busiest young actors on the scene today. With nearly a decade of impressive television credits under his belt, Campbell first attracted national attention by playing the title role in Disney's *THE ROCKETEER* (1991). His strong performance in *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA* (1992) further solidified his stature as a major-league talent on the silver screen. Campbell's recent prime-time venture, ABC's *MOON OVER MIAMI*, in which he starred as Detective Walter Tatum, was cancelled, but that doesn't mean he lacks for work. Other recently completed projects include the highly acclaimed Civil War epic *GETTYSBURG* (1993) and *TALES OF THE CITY*. In *TALES* (which had its U. S. debut via PBS' *AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE*), Campbell gives a sensitive performance as Jon Fielden in this first television adaptation based on Armistead Maupin's popular series of books.

Born in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1960, Bill Campbell spent much of his youth in Chicago before moving to Los Angeles to pursue an acting career. Producers were impressed with the young actor's style, and, in 1985, he won the role of Luke Fuller, one of Steven Carrington's string of doomed lovers, on ABC's enormously popular *DYNASTY*. Several seasons later, Campbell was cast as a rookie detective in NBC's popular (but short-lived) *CRIME STORY*. *Scarlet Street* was able to catch an interview with Bill Campbell during a break from shooting *MOON OVER MIAMI* on location, in Florida.

Photo this page © The Walt Disney Company

*Scarlet Street:* Was your role on *DYNASTY* your first big break?

**Bill Campbell:** Yes, it was.

*SS:* How did it come about?

**BC:** I just auditioned for it. I came out to California in the summer of 1984, and my first job, or really my second job, was an episode of *HOTEL*. Maybe I had a bit of an advantage coming from that, because I think that they liked me on that show. So, then I auditioned for *DYNASTY*, and that happened.

*SS:* You played Luke Fuller. Most of Steven Carrington's lovers didn't survive an entire season. What happened to Luke?

**BC:** My character was shot dead in the Moldavian wedding massacre between Catherine Oxenberg and Michael Praed, the English kid who had played Robin Hood. They wanted me to renew my contract for however long, but I respectfully declined. So they had my character die.

*SS:* And you went on to become *THE ROCKETEER*. How did you win that role?

**BC:** The first time I met for *THE ROCKETEER*, I was doing the Southern California Renaissance Fair, playing Petruchio in a half hour version of *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*. I had a beard

and long hair, and I went in to meet Joe Johnston and the producer, Larry Gordon, for *THE ROCKETEER*. I think that they were a bit taken aback and

had no idea who I was or why I was even there. So many months passed after that, and they saw a bunch of other people in town. Then, as far as what I

hear happened, Joe was looking over names on a sheet of all the people they had seen the whole summer long. He was looking over the sheet on the last day of screen tests, and he pointed to my name and said—apparently because he'd forgotten that he had seen me—"Why don't we bring this guy in? We haven't seen him in a long time." And they brought me in, and by this time, I had shaved my face and cut my hair and looked pretty much like the character.

*SS:* Hadn't you appeared on *CRIME STORY* between auditions?

**BC:** In between? Actually, I'd done *CRIME STORY* before that. I started on *CRIME STORY* in 1986 and got done with it in 1988 or something.

*SS:* Did you find the flying scenes in *THE ROCKETEER* difficult?

**BC:** No. I didn't do any of the flying scenes in which The Rocketeer flew by himself. They had stunt guys do that with a bunch of wires and stuff. I did some of the flying scenes in the old antique planes, though. That was a lot of fun!



Bill Campbell as *THE ROCKETEER*



**LEFT:** Remember those *DYNASTY* T-shirts with "I survived the Moldavian massacre" on the front? Well, Luke Fuller (Bill Campbell) didn't survive. **CENTER:** The cast of *CRIME STORY*. A baby faced Campbell is second from the right. **RIGHT:** In *TALES OF THE CITY*, Campbell plays Dr. Jon Fielden, his second gay character in a major TV production.

**SS:** Financially, the movie didn't live up to studio expectations. Hadn't it been planned as the first in a series?

**BC:** I think they had an idea of doing a sequel. They thought it was going to be a pretty popular film. But, you know, I bumped into somebody who had been in the Disney marketing department, sometime after that movie. In fact, I bumped into him this year, and he told me that he thought that Disney had dropped the ball entirely on the advertising of the movie. He said that Jeffrey Katzenberg had the notion of *THE ROCKETEER* being this classy kind of adventure movie. He had a sort of art deco poster, if you remember—very 1930s, which is appealing in a lot of ways, aesthetically, but it's not really going to grab a bunch of younger viewers. This is not me conjecturing. This is from somebody who was actually working there at the time. He said that they really dropped the ball on the whole thing.

**SS:** The people who saw it loved it.

**BC:** I did, too!

**SS:** Next came the role of Quincy Morris in *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*. The character is a minor one; in fact, most film versions of the novel omit him. Did that concern you?

**BC:** No. I mean, you're right that he's a minor character in the movie. In fact, he hasn't been in most of the movies made, but if you read the novel, Quincy Morris is probably the foremost of the three suitors. Well, not the foremost, but he plays a big part in the novel. It is Quincy himself in the novel who's responsible for really killing Dracula—and at the end of this movie. He gets killed in return, and

then Mina and Jonathan go off and get married, and have a child and name him after Quincy. . .

**SS:** And they all live happily ever after!

**BC:** Yeah—except for Quincy, who dies! (Laughs)

**SS:** By most accounts, the rehearsal period at Francis Ford Coppola's home was pretty wild.

**BC:** Well, it was great. It wasn't as wild as maybe you've heard from some people, but it was a lot of fun. We did a couple of nights of going down to the local pub and doing a fair amount of tippling and that kind of thing. But it was a good time; it was a really good time!

**SS:** What's your opinion of the film?

**BC:** My opinion of the finished film? Well, truthfully, I'm a big fan of the book. If I'd never read the book, then I might have felt more kindly toward the film. But I don't dislike the film. I just think that it wasn't the kind of tack I would have liked to see. Coppola obviously is brilliant, and the visual style is just tremendous, but I just didn't like the script. I thought that the script was . . .

**SS:** Lacking something?

**BC:** I really do. I really do! To me, the novel was essentially about the Victorian males' fear of burgeoning female sexuality—you know, a collective sexuality—and for the script to be emphatically about a love between Dracula and Mina is to kind of trivialize it. To trivialize the book, really. The movie really could have been a lot more horrible—and I mean that in the good sense of the word—if they had really gotten the essence of the book.

**SS:** There was disappointment, to say the least, in Keanu Reeves' portrayal of Jonathan Harker. Many *Scarlet Street* staffers thought you would have been better in the role.

**BC:** Well, at first, Coppola wanted me to play that part. The studio wouldn't have anything of it. So that was a disappointment at first. Though, after I'd thought about it, I realized that I probably would have more fun playing the cowboy than playing Harker. Actually, that's probably not true, but it was a very nice consolation prize. Of course I would have preferred to have the bigger part, but I really enjoyed the smaller part!

**SS:** Would you say *THE ROCKETEER* was more demanding than *DRACULA*?

**BC:** For me, yes, because I worked 78 out of 80 days.

**SS:** Is it difficult to make an adjustment from acting on television to starring in big-budget movies?

**BC:** Yeah. I mean, I'm just finding that out, now. I've done TV before, but I've always done small roles—you know, small regular roles in a series. So I never really have been under the crunch. But I'm the lead in *MOON OVER MIAMI*, and I'm just realizing how terribly hard up for time they are. Everything is done under the gun, and it's sort of a high-pressure situation. And it's frustrating, because no one—no one—gets to do what they would like to do. No one does! I don't, the rest of the cast doesn't, the producers don't, the directors don't, the writers don't—the way I feel about it is, it's almost a losing proposition from the get-go. In a way.

**SS:** The finished product looks good.





It makes a swell centerpiece, but there's no room for the table settings! Bill Campbell, Cary Elwes, Anthony Hopkins, Richard E. Grant, and Sadie Frost have stake for dinner in *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA* (1992).

**BC:** It does. It's really a testament to the people we have here. It's a great group of people, and it's the reason that the show is as good as it is, given the limits of doing series television.

**SS:** You play a detective. Do you have any interest in mystery stories—or, for that matter, horror and fantasy?

**BC:** Oh, sure! I've read all of Sherlock Holmes, the Arthur Conan Doyle stories; I'm a big fan of that sort of thing. I love Dickens; I love C. S. Lewis and Agatha Christie, I love! John LeCarré! Yeah, I'm a big fan of the genre.

**SS:** A lot of critics have compared *MOON OVER MIAMI* to *MOONLIGHTING*.

**BC:** Well, that would be a natural thing for them to do.

**SS:** Critics have said that *MOONLIGHTING* got into trouble when the two leads fell into bed together. Will *MOON OVER MIAMI* avoid that pitfall?

**BC:** You know, I don't know that it is a pitfall. I think it's kind of being nice when they say that's the reason that

show failed. Most people in the business know that *MOONLIGHTING* failed because the actors couldn't get along with each other! (Laughs) It was really such an ordeal that the production sort of bogged down.

**SS:** You've just played a major role in *TALES OF THE CITY*.

**BC:** That, also, came about by just auditioning. I just happened to audition for it. I read it; I had an audition. I loved the material and I decided that I needed to have a part in it, and I went and got one.

**SS:** Do you think there's still a stigma within the industry about an actor playing a gay role?

**BC:** I know there's no stigma about it in the industry. A good percentage of folks in the industry are gay themselves. It's really a public perception that it would be harmful—and I'm not even sure that that's the case, anymore.

**SS:** There were six *TALES OF THE CITY* books in all. If the first show is successful, would you be interested in doing another one?

**BC:** Oh, I'd love to do another one! I had a great time doing this one. It was just real y well-written.

**SS:** Were you familiar with the books before doing the miniseries?

**BC:** No, I wasn't. I'd seen them on the bookshelves and I'd always thought to pick one up, but I never did. Of course, I read the book as soon as I got the script—and the script is pretty much on the money as far as the book is concerned. But I did read the book and I loved it.

**SS:** You were on Broadway recently.

**BC:** That came about because my good friend, Steve Lang, whom I've known since we did *CRIME STORY* together, had been talking for years about doing a production of *HAMLET*. He finally got one together at the Roundabout Theatre, in which he was to play Hamlet—and he tells me that he made it a condition of his contract that I play Laertes. So they had me play Laertes! That was great, great fun. I'd love to do other plays. I've been acting for 10 years, and I'm just beginning to get serious about it! (Laughs)

**SS:** Is acting something that you'd always wanted to pursue?

**BC:** No. Actually, I just sort of fell into it. I wanted to be a commercial artist; specifically, I wanted to draw comic

Steve Randisi has contributed to *Classical Images*. He is a member of the *DARK SHADOWS* festival committee.



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- *Going Spanish* (1934) Bob Hope
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- *The Magic Lantern* (1903)
- *The Clock-Maker's Dream* (1903)
- *The Cook in Trouble* (1904)
- *The Mermaid* (1904)
- *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1928) Silent American version
- *Bela Lugosi Interview* (1951)
- *Cops* (1922) Buster Keaton
- *Tars and Stripes* (1935) Keaton no main title ends abruptly

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- James Dean auto safety film
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- *Mr. Hurry-Up of New York* (1907)
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**LEFT:** Bill Campbell and Ally Walker on *MOON OVER MIAMI*. **RIGHT:** Cynda Williams, Chloe Webb, Marcus D'Amico, and Campbell in *TALES OF THE CITY*. **BELOW:** The vampire hunters of *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*.

books. I was in commercial art school. I had a friend who was in acting class at the time, and I thought that it looked like a lot of fun—and kind of a lark. So I dropped out of art school and went to acting class—much to the chagrin of my parents! I don't really know why I did it, other than it looked like a lot of fun—and probably less work than commercial art.

**SS:** Did you read the comic books to familiarize yourself with *THE ROCKETEER*?

**BC:** Oh, sure!

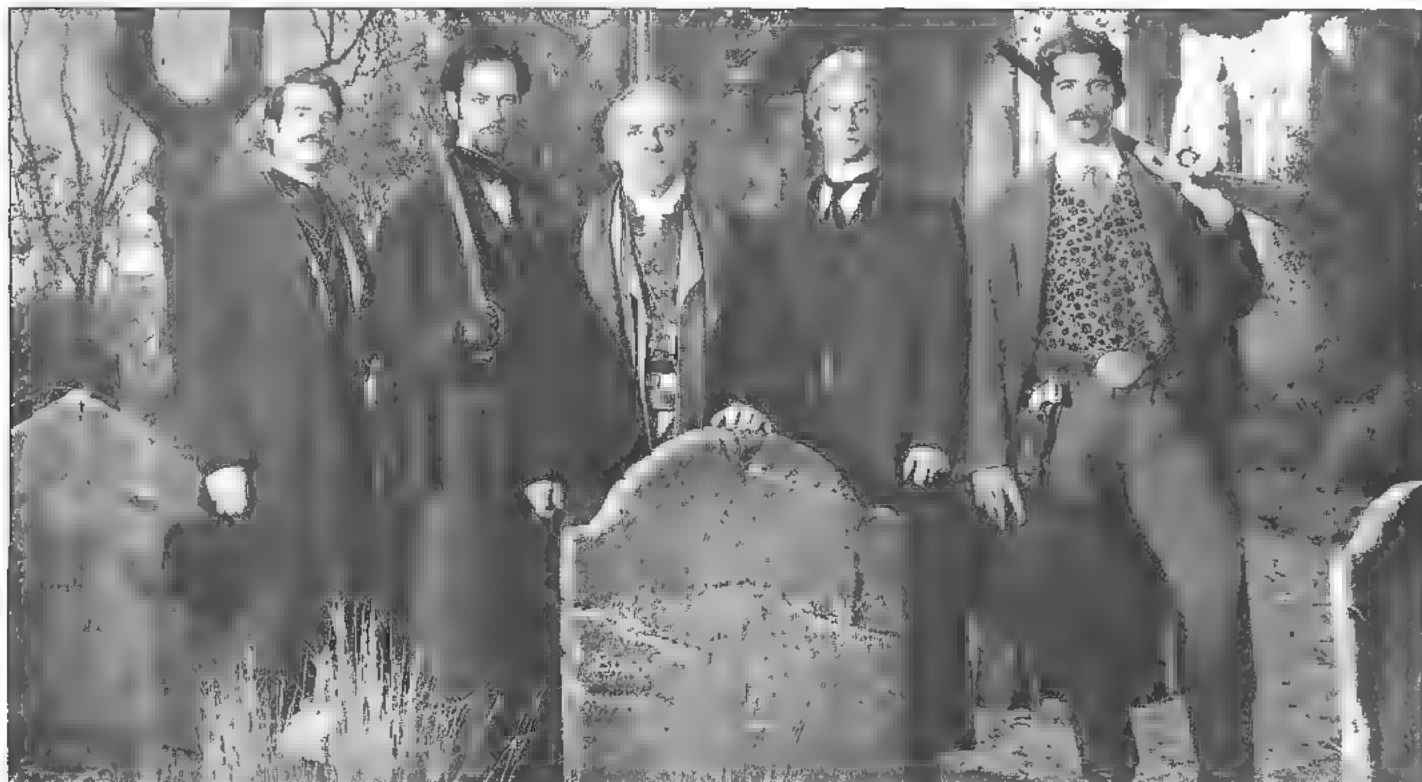
**SS:** You have several brothers. Are they in the business?

**BC:** I have two brothers. Neither of them are in the business . . . yet!

**SS:** Do you have any unrealized projects? Stories you've developed for yourself?

**BC:** There's tons of stuff I'd like to do, although there's nothing specific. Well, actually, my roommate [Peter Geiger] and I have a script that we wrote together from a short story. In fact, it's

sort of a classic science-fiction short story from the 50s. The name of it is "A Cold Equation". We'd like to produce that; he'd like to direct it, and maybe I'd star in it. But that's probably a couple of years away. He just got his first job directing and I've got stuff to do myself, but we are hoping to get a little stuff going between us. For the meantime, I'd like to do some feature films. But you never know, it's such a crazy business.



# Twice Told TALES

by KEN SCHACTMAN



Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City*—to all of you who are already familiar with this delightful novel, nothing more needs to be said to make you tune into the miniseries of the same name debuting in January on PBS' AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE. For the rest, a few notes on its genesis and production are necessary.

*Tales* originated as a fictional column in the *San Francisco Chronicle* and was later reedited into a novel, the first of six to document the lives and adventures of the inhabitants of 28 Barbary Lane, on Russian Hill, in the 1970s. It is, in fact, a time capsule from a lost epoch, a time of sex, drugs, and rock and roll, of innocence happily lost, when being decadent was still a creative experience, set in the city that typified the era.

It is sadly ironic that *Tales of the City* had to travel to England to find Producer Antony Root, American production companies being too squeamish to present an unvarnished look at times past. The adaptation, scripted by Richard Kramer (THIRTYSOMETHING), is faithful to the original in both spirit and detail. The director, Alastair Reid, begins our trip to Lotus Land with an ironic homage to Hitchcock by copying, even to the background music, the opening shot of *VERTIGO* (1958), the camera doing a slow pan over the face of a young woman—but what a difference! Instead of Kim Novak's movie-star hauteur and darkling eyes, we encounter the wheat-blond hair and wide blue orbs of Mary Ann Singleton as played by Laura Linney (LORENZO'S OIL), a naïf from Cleveland who, on vacation in San Francisco, falls in love with America's answer to the Emerald City and decides to stay. Like Dorothy in Oz, she proceeds to meet a collection of weird and wonderful people, most notably her landlady, Anna Madrigal, who dresses in caftans, turbans, and an air of mystery, deliciously played by Olympia Dukakis (MOONSTRUCK, STEEL MAGNOLIAS), and Edgar Halcyon, Mary Ann's high-powered, old money boss, movingly portrayed by Donald Moffat (LOGAN'S RUN, CHINA BEACH). These people head up the two main groups of characters whose lives intertwine like macramé as the plot develops

Mrs. Madrigal's tenants are almost all young, single, and hungry for love. Meet Brian Hawkins, a pumped-up, feverish womanizer played by Paul Gross (COLD COMFORT, RAY BRADBURY THEATRE) on one of his typical nights on the prowl. At a co-ed bathhouse ("the cleanest orgies in town"), Brian meets Hillary and is about to score when . . . Ah, but that would be telling! Then there is Mona Ramsey, played by Chloe Webb (SID AND NANCY, CHINA BEACH), a loony, coke-snorting copywriter for Halcyon Communications, who is worried that she might be a "fag hag" because she spends so much time with her best friend, Michael "Mouse" Tolliver, portrayed by Marcus D'Amico (FULL METAL JACKET, ANGELS IN AMERICA) as a truly lovable and lovelorn guy. Mouse moves in with Mona when his affair with an ex-Marine recruiter falls flat: "He panicked, I guess. We were buying furniture together and stuff." Finally, we have Norman Neal Williams (the real name of *Scarlet Street* friend and interviewee Aron Kincaid) played by Stanley DeSantis (CANDYMAN, THE PAPER CHASE). Norman is a strange, raincoated figure on an even stranger mission, who lives on Mrs. Madrigal's roof.

The Halcyon clan can best be described as the Rich and Queasy. Veteran Nina Foch (CRY OF THE WEREWOLF, THE TEN COMMANDMENTS) plays Frannie, Edgar's pixilated wife, who collects celebrities and rum bottles. DeDe Halcyon Day, her daughter, as characterized by Barbara Garrick (THE FIRM, SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE) is a sad and lonely socialite who finds solace in food and the boy who delivers it. She is unhappily married to Beauchamp (pronounced 'Beecham') Day, a well-packaged heel, ably accomplished by Thomas Gibson (AGE OF INNOCENCE, FAR AND AWAY), who seduces Mary Ann because . . . Now that really would be telling! DeDe and Beauchamp, by the way, live in the same posh apartment building that Kim Novak presumably occupied in—yes—*VERTIGO*. It is a small world.

Filling out the cast and tangling the plot even more is the ever-excellent William Campbell (MOON OVER





The men in Mary Ann Singleton's life include philandering Beauchamp Day (Thomas Gibson, LEFT) and lawyer/waiter Brian Hawkins (Paul Gross, RIGHT). PREVIOUS PAGE: Fresh from Cleveland, Mary Ann Singleton (Laura Linney) contemplates San Francisco in Armistead Maupin's *TALES OF THE CITY*.

MIAMI, DRACULA) as Jon Fielden, the handsome, upscale doctor whom Mouse literally falls for at the roller rink. Jon also knows DeDe because . . . I've really got to stop doing that! Cynda Williams (*MO' BETTER BLUES*) plays D'orothea Wilson, a Halcyon model who returns to San Francisco to look up an old love. This brings us to an uncredited costar, namely the city itself. The old girl has never looked more appealing.

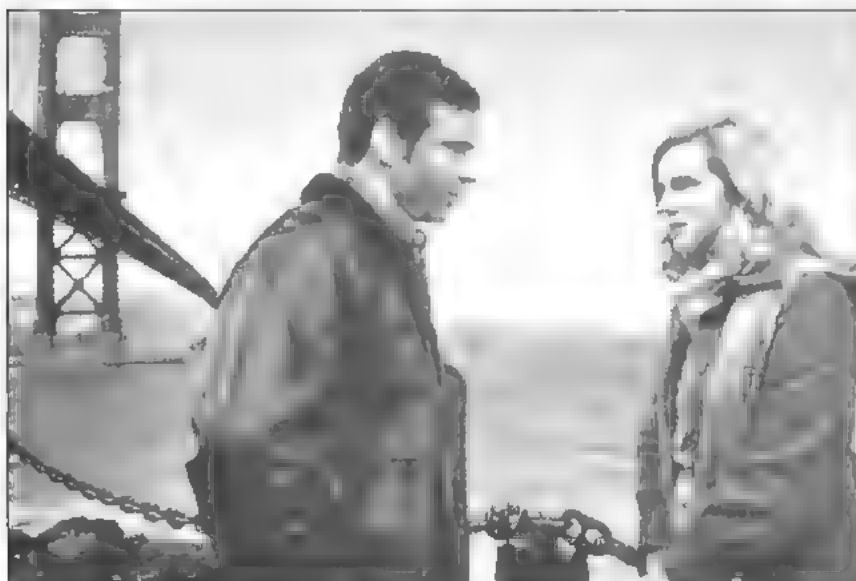
Actors of note can be glimpsed in delightful cameos, including Mary Kay Place as Prue Giroux, a member of DeDe's set who holds consciousness-raising sessions, such as "Rapping about Rape", for her moneyed peers; Edie Adams as Faith Healer Ruby Miller, Rod Steiger as a bookstore owner, Karen Black as herself, and Ian McKellen as the queen bee of a circle of snooty "A" gays.

This ensemble tapestry forms the warp and woof of the unfolding mysteries. Unlike the typically tension-filled Hitchcock thriller, or the conventional detective story, *TALES OF THE CITY* has no simple narrative line, no foreigners with superior gray cells or aged beldames knitting clues together, not even a murder—although two people do

die. Instead, the viewer is presented with a more subtle and more real set of mysteries based on identity and motive. Who are these people, really? As Brian tells Mary Ann, "We all have secrets in this town. You just have to dig a little deeper for them." Almost no one is who they appear to be at first glance, and, as the story unfolds in an organic, leisurely manner appropriate to the miniseries format, the viewer is treated to a number of astounding revelations. At the close, as in real life, no one character possesses all the pieces of the puzzle. Only the viewers have been privy to everything. Or have we?

The series makes an excellent introduction to Armistead Maupin's world, and hopefully the "And then what happened?" syndrome will drive viewers to his other books, which continue the saga: *28 Barbary Lane*, a hard-cover volume published by HarperCollins at \$25.00 a pop, comprises *Tales of the City*, *More Tales*, and *Further Tales*, and a companion volume with a final trilogy. So why not step back into the 70s, when sex was an adventure, not a health hazard, and "Bourgeois paranoia!" was an epithet, not an acceptable life style?

LEFT: *TALES OF THE CITY* makes use of locations from Alfred Hitchcock's *VERTIGO* (1958). Mouse (Marcus D'Amico) and Mary Ann (Laura Linney) visit the spot on which Kim Novak jumped in the Bay, only to be saved by James Stewart. RIGHT: Mona Ramsey (Chloe Webb) hugs the enigmatic Anna Madrigal (Olympia Dukakis), who is really . . .



# Our Man on Baker Street

## *The Cracker Factory*

I wonder if you are familiar with that gloriously silly horror movie *THE TINGLER* (1959). It's the one in which dear, departed Vincent Price has discovered that, when a person reaches a high point of terror, a creature forms on the spine: *THE TINGLER*. In extreme cases, when a person is frightened and unable to scream to release that fear, *THE TINGLER* can snap the spine, causing death by terror. Price experiments by frightening a mute and manages to capture one of these little critters, but, in the way of horror films, the slimy scorpionlike creature escapes and runs riot in a movie house. (Cue producer William Castle to connect the seats of the cinema to an electric supply to give the audience a little tingle while watching the film.)

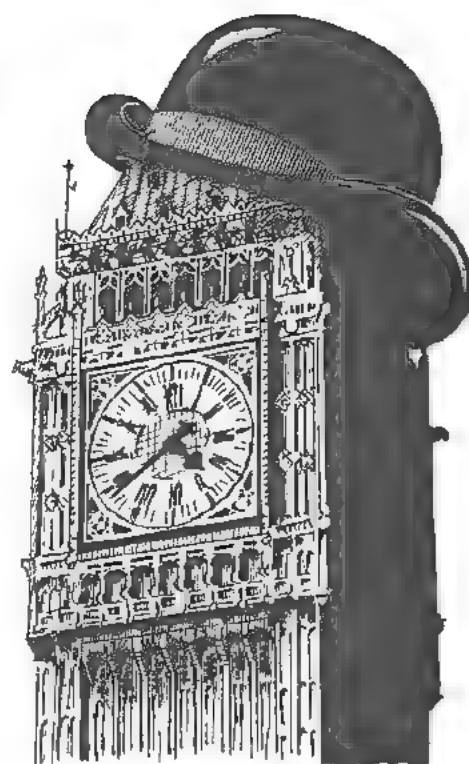
Well, I have my own tingler! Something grows up my spine—created not from fear, but from excitement at discovering something brilliant—when I'm watching something new and tremendous on screen. I tingled liberally when I saw the first *MORSE* film in 1987, long before the series was acclaimed. Recently, I've been tingling like mad watching a new crime series made by Granada Television and based in Manchester. The series is *CRACKER*, and it features hulky Robbie Coltrane as Fitz, a psychologist used by the police to help them crack

difficult murder cases. But wait a moment: Fitz is like no psychologist you've met ever before. He's an alcoholic, a compulsive gambler, and an irascible bastard to boot. He's also very witty. In the first episode, we see his wife leave him because of his gambling ways, and he lands in gaol for being drunk and disorderly. While all this is going on, he manages to solve a particularly gruesome murder mystery. There's also a burgeoning relationship with a young lady detective, Penhaligon, whom Fitz insists on calling Panhandle. It really is compulsive stuff.

TV companies have been straining hard to find a replacement for *MORSE* to boost their schedules, but they've made the big mistake of travelling down similar roads: leafy roads, in fact, with charismatic cops, convoluted plots, and a variety of cameo-played suspects. Copycat programming! Granada, with *CRACKER*, have come up with something different: fresh, modern, and exciting. It's beautifully filmed, and Manchester looks like New York in all its moods. If there is any TV justice, it will not be long before it is shown in the States. Mark my words, it's gonna be big.

## *The Eagle Has Landed*

How many of you remember *JASON KING*? It was a cult series in the 1970s, featuring Peter Wyngarde as



the super-agent King with his flared trousers, enormous flowered ties, and wild backcombed hair. Yes, *that* Jason King. Wyngarde slipped from public view in the 80s, but now he's playing a part in the new *MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* series (Langdale Pike in *THE THREE GABLES*). He still looks marvellous, belying his 60-odd years. I told him that he starred in one of my favourite supernatural thrillers, 1962's *THE NIGHT OF THE EAGLE* (*BURN WITCH, BURN*). He grinned at the thought of it.

"Do you remember the ending of the movie?" he asked, still smiling. I did indeed. A large stone eagle turns into a real one and flies after Wyngarde, a professor who has denied the existence of magic and witchcraft. "Everyone was protected behind metal shields: director, cameraman, all the crew. Only bloody-fool me had agreed to do the shot and not use a stunt man. I wanted to show real terror on my face. And that's what you got. As I ran, the trainer released the eagle, and I heard those enormous wings flapping behind me. I tell you, I have never been as frightened in my life! I was heavily padded all round, but, when the beast landed on my back, its claws cut through the padding and I had several deep cuts down my back."

When I got home I ran the video of the movie. It is true; in that scene, Wyngarde's features are twisted with terror. Check it out for yourself.

—David Stuart Davies

SCARLET STREET 67



Robbie Coltrane and Geraldine Somerville in *CRACKERS*

# Lovecraft

on Screen



by Robert M. Price

I have always been surprised by the number of critical reviews and articles on the (till recently) quite small collection of film adaptations of the stories of H. P. Lovecraft. Virtually every such review is severely negative, bitter, one suspects, with the gall of the inevitably disappointed fan, whom nothing will satisfy. It may come as something of a surprise, then, that many film versions of Lovecraft are not so far removed from the original stories as die-hard Lovecraftians have claimed.

Lovecraft snuck unceremoniously onto the movie screen for the first time in 1963, under the pen name of Edgar Allan Poe, in *THE HAUNTED PALACE*. Roger Corman's Poe films were going well, so American International Pictures decided to sneak in some Lovecraft under a proven label. The only link to Poe was Vincent Price's sonorous (and superfluous) recitation of the poem "The Haunted Palace", which makes a minor appearance in "The Fall of the House of Usher". Otherwise, the movie is an adaptation of Lovecraft's novella *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*.

One need not merely surmise this: None of the original names have been changed. We meet Ward, his baneful doppelgänger Joseph Curwen (both portrayed by Price), Ezra Weeden (played by Leo Gordon), Simon Orne (played by Larry Talbot . . . er, Lon Chaney, Jr.), etc.

The movie sacrifices the painstaking antiquarianism of Lovecraft's story (as does the later *Ward* adaptation, 1991's *THE RESURRECTED*). But in some ways *THE HAUNTED PALACE* is more Lovecraftian than Lovecraft. Surprisingly, Dr. Willett (Frank Maxwell) asks Ward if he has ever heard of Cthulhu, Yog-Sothoth, or the *Necronomicon*! Admittedly two of these receive brief mention in the original novella, but the movie treats us to a nutshell exposition of the whole Cthulhu Mythos, with the implication that Curwen is not simply seeking omnipotent power for himself, but is preparing for the return of the Old Ones. This is not clear in the original, but it is certainly a possible (and sharp-eyed) reading of certain of Lovecraft's hints therein.

Screenwriter Charles Beaumont takes certain creative liberties that have been scorned by fanatical purists, but can be defended in their own right. For instance, he has

Ward become psychically possessed by his ancestor, rather than having Ward follow inherited instructions to raise Curwen from the dead, only to be murdered and replaced by his look-alike kinsman. Though psychic displacement is something of a weaker notion, it has in some quarters so controlled the reading or recollection of Lovecraft's tale that *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* is occasionally described as a "novel of psychic possession".

Also creative is Beaumont's notion that it is not only Curwen who has look-alike descendants in Ward's day. Ezra Weeden and the whole lynch mob are represented by latter-day counterparts, whom the returned Curwen dis-

patches one by one in the manner of the vengeful Ygor in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1939).

Two years later, Lovecraft's own favorite among his longer tales, "The Colour out of Space", came to the movie house as *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!* (In England it was called *MONSTER OF TERROR*, not much of an improvement.) Lovecraft fans howl with derision at the bumbling choice of Nick Adams as the hero, especially since there isn't a hero in the original, much less a damsel in distress for him to rescue.

All right: Most of this is fair criticism. But not all. Lovecraft admitted that he was weak in characterization, but he didn't much regret it; he made the conscious choice to depict a mood, not persons and their foibles, as the center of his stories. Characters in a horror tale, he felt, should function as mere windows for the reader to behold the illusion of a suspension of the laws of normalcy and the mundane.

In "The Colour out of Space" this means that we hear of the happenings of the "strange days" when a meteorite fell in the Nahum Gardner farmstead outside Arkham, Massachusetts, and we hear it indirectly, through two narrators, one an old rustic named Ammi Pierce, who knew the Gardners and eventually put them out of their space-

born misery, the other an unnamed surveyor working to build a new reservoir over the sight of the meteor's devastation. The latter narrates the story, reconstructing it from old Ammi's meanderings decades after the events.

Where does Stephen Rhinehart (Nick Adams's character) fit in? Since the camera itself acts as narrator, scripter





Jerry Sohl combined the surveyor persona with Ammi Pierce, resulting in an outsider, a young scientist, who becomes involved with the Gardners—here renamed the Whitleys, in deference to the more famous Whateleys of "The Dunwich Horror". (Director Daniel Haller, who designed the sets for Roger Corman's series of Poe adaptations, helmed both *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!* and the 1969 film version of the latter tale.)

The three Gardner sons, who eventually perish ingloriously, have their places taken in the film by a lone daughter, the love interest which explains Rhinehart's involvement with the family—a necessary link once the role of old Ammi was taken by the scientist character. (Even had he been contemporaneous with the Gardners, Lovecraft's surveyor would scarcely have a natural link to justify the kind of involvement Ammi had as a close neighbor.)

The result is certainly a departure, but an excusable one. Less Lovecraftian is the happy ending. In the original, Lovecraft has everybody succumb sooner or later, in one of his most ominous endings.

What can be said in defense of the penultimate scene, in which Adams faces the wrath of old Corbin Whitley (a.k.a. Nahum Gardner, a.k.a. Boris Karloff), now changed into a shambling, glowing, radioactive monster? Even this, which can easily be dismissed as Hollywood schlock, reflects the last encounter between Ammi and Nahum in the story, Nahum having suddenly collapsed into a monstrous, eerily glowing caricature.

One thing more: Like *THE HAUNTED PALACE*, *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!* is ultimately more Lovecraftian than Lovecraft. In the original, Lovecraft tells us that the effect of the colour on local animal life was disturbing yet so subtle that it could not readily



Alas and alack, these May/December romances! Lon Chaney, Jr. (also lurking BELOW LEFT), Vincent Price, and Cathy Merchant in *THE HAUNTED PALACE* (1963).

be described. The movie junks this and gives us a stolen glimpse inside old Corbin's greenhouse, where he has been breeding farm animals under the influence of the meteorite, resulting in the amorphous mutations that we have come to expect from Lovecraft—whether or not he provides them in a given story. "It's like a zoo in hell!"

And wouldn't we like to see someone find and open a hoary old volume called the *Necronomicon*? In "The Colour out of Space", we don't, but in *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!*, we do. Rhinehart, in the course of his snooping about, stumbles upon a familiar-looking iron-hasped book. True, its title is merely *Cults of Evil* (no doubt because the real title would have meant absolutely nothing to uninitiated viewers.) The title, though, is reminiscent of Robert E. Howard's *Nameless Cults*, another Cthulhu Mythos tome often mentioned by HPL. And the ominous words read by Rhinehart, as any Lovecraftian recognizes, form a *précis* of the *Necronomicon* passage quoted in Lovecraft's "The Festival". So is this scene genuinely Lovecraftian or isn't it? Well, both!

The third film in the canon retains its position only precariously. The 1966 movie *THE SHUTTERED ROOM* is based on a short story of the same name, but the story in question is not by Lovecraft! Instead, it is one of the bogus "posthumous collaborations" perpetrated by August Derleth, who was in the habit of seizing upon a bare idea or plot device mentioned somewhere in a Lovecraft note or letter, then writing a (usually poor) story from it and sharing the credit (or, more likely, the blame) with Lovecraft—who must have been turning over in his grave at the favor.

Thus, the connection is slim, despite the many inept borrowings in Derleth's "The Shuttered Room" from such superlative Lovecraft tales as "The Dunwich Horror" and "The Shadow over Innsmouth". Abner Whateley inherits an old Dunwich house with a mysterious

*Continued on page 73*



# An Animated Conversation with Jeffrey Combs

## Interview by Robert M. Price

Beginning in 1985 with the **RE-ANIMATOR**, the career of actor Jeffrey Combs has been closely linked with the works of H. P. Lovecraft. Here, in an exclusive talk with *Scarlet Street*, Combs discusses his contribution to the Mythos.

**Scarlet Street:** Have you caught much flack from Lovecraft purists over the liberties taken with the original texts in the **RE-ANIMATOR** and **FROM BEYOND** films?

**Jeffrey Combs:** Amazingly, I haven't. In fact, most people are just avid fans of the movies. I really don't get too many Lovecraft aficionados coming at me with diatribes about defiling their deity. There are certainly reasons for people to feel that way, because they're very loose adaptations, but I don't really get that. Lovecraft is very hard to translate to cinematic form, anyway, so maybe they put that into the equation as well. I mean, he's very verbal and literary and you can't translate to a visual style without losing a lot.

**SS:** You used more elements from the original sequence of six stories for the sequel, **BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR**, than for the first film. Will there likely be a third "Herbert West" film for which you might use even more?

**JC:** Well, there's not much left to use, really. Brian [Yuzna, the director] kind of threw into the second one everything that he hadn't used in the first one. If there is a third one, we'll probably just have to go with the spirit of Lovecraft; in fact, the title would probably be something like **BEYOND RE-ANIMATOR**. Double intention: not only a continuation of

the story, but also an acknowledgment that we kind of had to go out on our own here, beyond what we originally had to keep it alive.

**SS:** Can you tell us anything about the rumored lost beginning of **BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR**?

**JC:** There were actually four beginnings to **BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR**, and Brian had to decide which one to use. In the movie itself, there's actually two beginnings: There's the floating head in the dark, and then there's the war sequence. There was another beginning, which actually

and shoes edging its way through and crouching down—and it's Herbert with his glasses broken and he's slimed and everything. Dan says, "I thought you died." And Herbert says, "No. Hill didn't kill me; he didn't have the guts." I thought it was a pretty good beginning, but Brian didn't feel good about how he had shot it, and so he opted to go for an action packed beginning with the war sequence.

**SS:** What can you tell us about **RE-ANIMATOR** having been edited into two different versions? There's so much in the R-rated version, by way of transitional continuity material, that the unrated version seems to be the cut one!

**JC:** What you're seeing is decisions that are made in the editing room. Brian and Stuart [Gordon, the producer] were not around. We were all over in Italy making **FROM BEYOND**, and they realized that they could make a little extra money if they cut all the "gratuitous violence" out of **RE-ANIMATOR** and filled it with footage that had wound up on the editing-room floor. That wasn't something that Brian or Stuart wanted. It's caused a lot of confusion because, if it hadn't come out, no one would know; no one would have this comparison. The original screenplay had a lot more to do with the love interest between Dan and Meg. There was a whole sequence in which it was revealed that Herbert himself was shooting up the reanimating fluid—which was never my favorite, 'cause I felt Herbert doesn't need anything to be Herbert. He doesn't need anything to give him an edge; he's already got it.

And then there was this whole sequence in which Hill hypnotized everybody to get them to do his will. Now, all of those things, they felt when they were editing the movie



Possessed by Lovecraft! Jeffrey Combs played the late author in **NECRONOMICON** (1993).

happened immediately after the end of the first movie, where Dan is trying to revive Meg and she dies, and then, out of the crowd of feet, you see this slimy pair of black pants



LEFT: Jeffrey Combs as Tillinghast in FROM BEYOND (1986). RIGHT: Combs may not have read much Lovecraft, but he became Lovecraft in NECRONOMICON (1993). BELOW: Combs as Herbert West, RE-ANIMATOR (1985).

together, weren't necessary to move the story along. If anything, they slowed it down. I personally think the R-rated version is pretty plodding; I prefer the unrated version, myself. It was purely, "Hey! We can sell this to TV as well, so let's do something that we can put on TV." Because if they did the original unrated version and cut out the violence, the movie would be about 15 minutes long! (Laughs)

SS: Have you read other Lovecraft stories that would make good films?

JC: Well, I'm lousy; I haven't really steeped myself in Lovecraft's writing. I kind of take it as it comes. In fact, I've just got through doing LURKING FEAR, which is based on a Lovecraft story. LURKING FEAR was shot in Romania. C. Courtney Joyner wrote and directed it. I hope the story holds up; it doesn't bear too much resemblance to the original one—once again, because Lovecraft does not lend himself to film. You have to take the spirit, the feeling, and a few elements that you can use, and go out on your own.

SS: It's unfair to fault a film for not being the book. If you like the book that much, read it and forget the film.

JC: Right. Sometimes it works, and sometimes they blow it even though it could have worked. My personal feeling is that THE SHINING is kind of . . . blown. I mean, what happened to the topiaries? And in its place they put a maze? Who cares?

SS: What else have you done that's Lovecraft-oriented?

JC: I did NECRONOMICON, which is an anthology film—three short Lovecraft stories; I play Lovecraft.

SS: How exciting!

JC: I'm the wrap-around; I get into this private library and find the book, and as I read, we dissolve to the stories. That was interesting, because I attempted, with a special-effects makeup artist, to get a resemblance to Lovecraft. It turned out quite well. I mean, we did a pretty good suggestion—a good chin and nose—of Lovecraft. Many years ago, Stuart Gordon wanted to do "Lurking Fear" as a movie, and his idea was that Lovecraft himself would be the main character. He wanted me to play it. (Laughs) And here it is years later, and I've done two movies this year. One is THE LURKING FEAR, in which I do not play Lovecraft, but I play a chain-smoking, bourbon-swilling small-town doctor, and then I play Lovecraft in another movie!

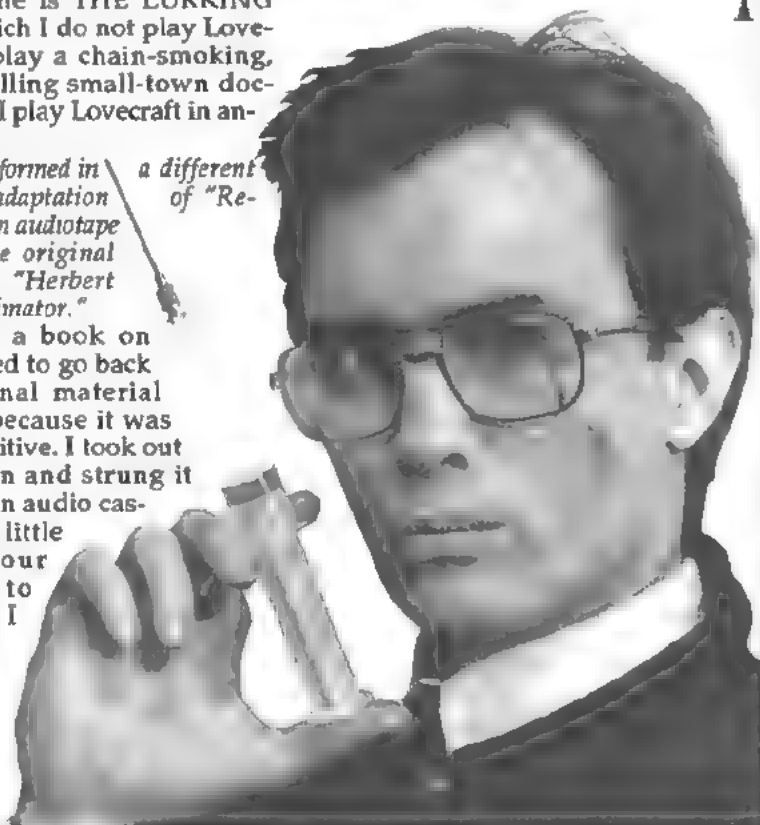
SS: You've performed in a different sort of media adaptation of "Re-Animator"—an audiotape reading of the original short story, "Herbert West—Re-Animator."

JC: It's like a book on tape. I decided to go back to the original material and edit it, because it was kind of repetitive. I took out the repetition and strung it together on an audio cassette that's a little over an hour long. I tried to do it as best I could, in a way that Lovecraft would have liked to have had

it done: no frills, no spooky sound effects—just a book on tape.

SS: What can you tell us about Parts magazine? Is this the flagship of Jeffrey Combs fandom?

JC: I am amazed! And confused and know not what to say—to quote Shakespeare! (Laughs) If anything has kept RE-ANIMATOR alive in a subterranean way, it's that magazine. I'm thankful for it. It's a little scary, but I'm thankful for it. I don't always agree with what's in it, but I've learned to keep my mouth shut. It's better to keep your mouth shut with the press. Oops! Sorry!





LEFT: Mrs. Ward's husband ain't the man he used to be. Debra Paget and Vincent Price in *THE HAUNTED PALACE* (1963). RIGHT: Price plays *THE HAUNTED PALACE* with his fellow fiends (Milton Parsons and Lon Chaney, Jr.).

## LOVECRAFT

*Continued from page 70*

shuttered room, which he is warned never to open and which seems to be empty. Naturally, he opens it, and a rash of weird deaths ensues, the product of an invisible monster's hunger. Said monster is the miscegenated spawn of an ancestor who had sexual traffic with Those Outside. Not a bad idea, you say? True, but it seemed a lot better in "The Dunwich Horror", from whence it was lifted bodily.

Rest assured, all such clumsy borrowings have been excised from the movie version, which has as little to do with Derleth's version as Derleth's has to do with any notes left by Lovecraft. Here the unseen monster in the shuttered room is simply Susannah Kelton's idiot twin sister (Carol Lynley), boarded up for years until heirs Susannah (Carol

Lynley, in a dual role) and Mike Kelton (Gig Young) arrive to a chilly reception by a local rustic named Ethan (Oliver Reed) and other surly Dunwich yokels.

This movie would seem to have much to condemn it, yet in some ways it captures the eerie feel of Lovecraft's parallel-world New England better than any other. And this is an important point: HPL's Arkham and Dunwich did not derive their weirdness primarily from encounters with the Old Ones. Rather, as the opening monologue of "The Picture in the House" makes clear, Lovecraft chose such locales precisely for their cultural and historical associations. They were already eerie in their own right, and it is this aspect of haunted New England that *THE SHUTTERED ROOM* conveys effectively. One senses a good deal of Wilbur Whateley in Ethan without his displaying a single

LEFT: Suzan Farmer and Nick Adams confront Boris Karloff in *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!* (1965). RIGHT: No, it's not the Silver Surfer's Grampa; it's the Immortal Mr. Karloff taking a shine to his victims in *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!*







LEFT: Gig Young and Carol Lynley take up uneasy residence in *THE SHUTTERED ROOM* (1966). RIGHT: Gidget Goes Cthulhu in 1969's *THE DUNWICH HORROR*, starring Sandra Dee and Dean Stockwell.

supernatural trait, because it is just this sort of rustic that provided the subtext for Wilbur's plausibility in the first place.

*THE DUNWICH HORROR* (1969), from the same alchemical lab that brought you *DIE, MONSTER, DIE!*, can boast of some moments of gross stupidity, as when visiting lecturer Henry Armitage (Ed Begley), no longer the librarian of Miskatonic University, finishes a lecture on spookery and casually hands the fabulously rare *Necronomicon* to coed Nancy Walker (Sandra Dee), asking her to return it to the library where, incredibly, it is on display for all to see—or steal, as Wilbur Whateley does later.

Further freedoms are taken with the text. Wilbur (played by Dean Stockwell) is more Mansonesque than monstrous (HPL had him an eight-foot-tall "goatish giant"), and, of course, there are no cute coeds in Lovecraft. But Nancy is there to become a human sacrifice to open the gates to the Old Ones, hardly an idea foreign to Lovecraft.

The movie certainly has its good points, as when Wilbur peruses the pages of the *Necronomicon*, reading silently (i.e., whispering voice-over) the salient passage from the story: "Yog-Sothoth is the Gate whereby the spheres meet. . . ." The flashback scene in which old Wizard Whateley (wheezingly played by a wild-eyed Sam Jaffe) announces Wilbur's birth to the loungers in Osborne's General Store is a perfect rendering of Lovecraft's original. "Some day yew folks'll hear a child o' Lavinny's a-callin' its father's name on the top o' Sentinel Hill. . . !"

A key difference between story and film is that, in the former, Wilbur gets killed by a guard dog in his effort to steal the *Necronomicon*, his brother later blindly rampaging until Armitage dispatches him. In the latter, however, Wilbur bears the tome away and very nearly carries out his plan, summoning his invisible twin to the altar stone to complete the sacrifice. This is not much of a departure once one sees what critic Donald R. Burleson sees: namely, that even in Lovecraft's version the invisible monster functions more like a transfiguration of Wilbur than a replacement, and thus is a continuation of the same character as far as plot structure is concerned.

While most early Lovecraft adaptations have a nasty tendency to convert HPL's ominous endings into happy ones, *THE DUNWICH HORROR* does the opposite. Wilbur is struck down at the climax, his brother banished as well, and Nancy is helped down from the altar, apparently to resume her life as a vacuous 60s coed. But viewers of the uncut version (TV butchers it) see, in a kind of privileged X-ray visible only to the audience, that Wilbur has impregnated her with a new Whateley changeling — to start the cycle over again in case he failed! Again, Burleson is right: Though Lovecraft has the good guys win, implicit in the story is the pessimism that it is a won battle in a war destined to be lost.

The very next year (1970) saw the release of *THE CRIMSON CULT* (or *THE CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR*), a wild adaptation of Lovecraft's "The Dreams in the Witch House". The essentials are here, but the Walter Gilman character has become nothing but an obnoxious 60s creep (Mark Eden) in search of his vanished brother. Eventually we see the (no longer oddly angled) attic room where reside the witch and her occult crew, but wizened Keziah Mason, renamed Lavinia (a nod to *THE DUNWICH HORROR*) and played by 60s horror queen Barbara Steele, is nothing short of voluptuous. Our hero is taken to the room and seduced into signing the soul-damning *Black Book*, but is rescued by the occult erudition of local expert Dr. Marshe (Boris Karloff).

The movie shares with the previous year's *DUNWICH HORROR* images of dancing, body-painted hippies. In the earlier film, the hippies were poor substitutes for the invisible Old Ones served by Wilbur. (I guess they didn't have much of a special-effects budget.) Still, the anticlimactic character of this depiction of the Old Ones highlights an interesting fact: We tend to read all Lovecraft's stories in light of one another, intertextually. In so doing, we miss the fact that we have perhaps read into "The Dunwich Horror" an overblown concept of the Old Ones derived from other stories, imagining them as transcendent cosmic powers, when at least in this story they are simply invisible aliens from a contiguous dimension (just as they are

in the earlier tale "From Beyond", as Lovecraft scholar Peter H. Cannon has pointed out).

We jump roughly a decade to the next crop of Lovecraft-inspired films. The new generation got off to a promising start with *RE-ANIMATOR* (1985), a hilariously loony adaptation of "Herbert West—Reanimator". It is shock schlock, with plenty of black humor, not to mention gore. Many Lovecraftians were outraged at the liberties it took. Yet I cannot help feeling that *RE-ANIMATOR* is by far the most faithful rendering of a Lovecraft tale to date. True, it does not try to follow the six-episode plot line of the original serialization, but it picks several of the most potent scenes and images and mortars them together with new scenes done in the same spirit. (The "head" scene, though it would have mortified the puritanical Lovecraft, seems entirely appropriate to the mood of the original. Again, if you will, more Lovecraftian than Lovecraft himself dared to be.)

Jeffrey Combs's performance as West is brilliant. Some names are changed, but most of the main characters have their counterparts in the original—except, of course, for Barbara Crampton's character, Dean Halsey's daughter. The addition of her character allows screenwriters Dennis Paoli, William J. Norris, and Stuart Gordon to tie more closely together disparate elements of the original.

As no one needs to be told, Lovecraft was essentially writing his own version of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* when he penned "Herbert West—Reanimator". The adapters of Herbert West to the screen simply take the ball and run with it. Just as important elements of Shelley's novel only made their screen appearance in the movie version's sequel/continuation, *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935), some of the episodes of Lovecraft's original serial were left out of *RE-ANIMATOR*, waiting to be included in a new shuffling of the deck in 1990's *BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR*.

Let's jump out of chronological sequence for a moment to consider both films together. *RE-ANIMATOR* ends with a scene right out of Stephen King's *Pet Sematary*. Dan Cain (West's hapless assistant, played by Bruce Abbott) has just chanced injecting his late girlfriend with the zombie serum. Will she come back as herself? In the sequel, we seem to discover that she has instead been torn asunder—all except for her heart—by the army of stiffs. To keep Cain interested in the experiments, West suggests building a new body to house the heart. The result is surprisingly sexy and grotesque at the same time.

The movie laughs and lunges along splendidly to a climax that is a true crescendo of the weird. In it, the wall separating West's lab from the adjacent cemetery comes crashing down as a host of angry stiffs, most of them owing their condition to Doc West and his serum, shamble in for an unwelcome visit. They are led by the severed head of the vengeful Dr. Hill. Whereas Hill's detached noggin had to be carried about ignominiously in a satchel in the first movie, it now sports a jaunty pair of grafted bat wings. He swoops into the surreal scene like the proverbial bat out of hell, leading the hit squad of the dead. In the nightmarish

brouhaha, the mausoleum above the lab caves in, showering unwholesomely nourished soil on the flailing knot of antagonists, with West, swatting at his gleefully cackling nemesis, at the blood shot eye of the storm.

Combs returned a year after *RE-ANIMATOR* in 1986's *FROM BEYOND*, as Crawford Tillinghast, young assistant to the Faustian Dr. Pretorious, played by Ted Sorel. (Another wink to *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*; pretty much the same Empire Pictures crew made all three films, though Brian Yuzna filled in for Stuart Gordon on *BRIDE*.)

The Pretorious character is named Tillinghast in Lovecraft's tale; the character has been split in two, the movie's Tillinghast corresponding roughly to the narrator of the original story. It says something that the original text of the Lovecraft story (one of his shortest and least important) has been used up by the time the opening credits of the movie roll. All the rest is ad-libbing!

The remainder of the movie wanders aimlessly, though even here it seems based on certain hints derived from the original by a kind of free association. For instance, a police investigator (Barbara Crampton), under the influence of Pretorious' machine ("the vibrator"), becomes a sex maniac like Pretorious. (I wonder if Crampton owes her role to a wicked reading of a line in the original: "These things should be left to the frigid and impersonal investigator . . ." Thus the police investigator who turns from horn-rimmed to horny in the course of the flick.)

HPL included no such sexual element, but it fits. He depicted his mad scientist as someone for whom the normal sensory range is too restrictive. It seems entirely appropriate, then, that he should try to press those senses to their limits before passing beyond them. Sexual adventuring would certainly have been on his agenda, as would mind-expanding drugs, which are for some reason not mentioned in the movie.

**A few years ago in Dunwich  
a half-witted girl bore  
illegitimate twins.**

**One of them was  
almost human!**



**The Dunwich Horror**  
H. P. LOVECRAFT'S  
CLASSIC TALE OF  
TERROR AND THE  
SUPERNATURAL  
AN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATION  
DOLBY DIGITAL  
COLOR BY MOVIELAB  
SANDRA DEE · DEAN STOCKWELL · ED BEGLEY  
LLOYD BOCHNER · JOANNA MOORE · JORDAN  
DONNA BAGCA · SAM JAFFE  
JAMES H. NICHOLSON · SAMUEL Z. ARKOFF · JAMES ROGER CORMAN · DANIEL HALLER  
CURTIS LEE HANSON · HENRY ROSENBAUM · RONALD SILKOSKY  
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And what of Pretorious as a shapeless ectoplasmic monster haunting the house? Not in Lovecraft—or is it? The narrator describes the agitated scientist as “so suddenly metamorphosed to a shivering gargoyle”, “this shaking parody on man”. Later he mentions a glimpse of “shining, revolving spheres” which “formed a constellation or galaxy” in the shape of “the distorted face of Crawford Tillinghast”.

THE CURSE (1987) is an innocuously titled second stab at adapting “The Colour out of Space”. In some ways it is closer to the original than DIE, MONSTER, DIE! Once again we witness a juggling of characters. Again the filmmakers drop the rustic figure of Ammi Pierce, but this time they retain the nameless surveyor, making him an unscrupulous land developer and lending him a weight of characterization that throws the story off balance—especially since he turns out to be a semicomical figure unprecedented in the Lovecraft story.

The scientists from Miskatonic University who, in the original, troop out to examine the newly-arrived meteorite are combined in the person of a young scientist (John Schneider) who is an ongoing character through the film.

As for the doomed Gardner family, they survive mostly intact from the original. Old Nahum, played, in a happy casting choice, by Claude Akins (a wonderful character actor famous for his redneck roles in 1960’s INHERIT THE WIND and as television’s Sheriff Lobo) is more crusty than Lovecraft made him. In fact, rendered as a dour religious fanatic, he is in a perpetually foul mood.

This is a clever and interesting change: In the original, Nahum is simply a devout, humble believer in country biblicist orthodoxy. He figures that the curse of the meteorite must be God’s judgment, though he knows not why. Lovecraft introduced

Nahum’s  
simple,



biblicistic faith as a bit of local color (i.e., not out of space). It is what one would expect from a rural Massachusetts farmer. But things have changed: Not only has the Gardner farmstead been moved south, where one might more likely find ingrained biblicism today, but such piety is no longer so naturally integrated into the culture as it was in Lovecraft’s day. Now, even where it has flourished for generations, in the Bible Belt, fundamentalism has become more self-conscious and pugnacious, ever on the defensive against half-imaginary secular humanism.

This change also creates possibilities for intrafamily relations, something important, since the David Chaskin script has filled in Lovecraft’s notorious lack of characterization and dialogue. One of the Gardner boys, played by Will Wheaton, becomes perhaps the central character, and escapes the final disintegration. (Before he does, he has a showdown with the colour-infested Nahum, reminiscent of that between Nick Adams and Boris Karloff.)

On the whole—and I step out on a glowing limb here—the earlier version of “The Colour out of Space”, DIE, MONSTER, DIE!, is closer to Lovecraft. Why? Because the thing that needs most to be retained, if one is to be faithful to Lovecraft, is the conveying of a mood. Nick Adams’ nasal Brooklynese notwithstanding, DIE, MONSTER, DIE! conveys a deeper sense of claustrophobic doom, of an imagined celestial boon gone wrong, of brooding menace.

Fritz Leiber has put his finger on what makes HPL’s fiction tick: It takes the marvels of science and makes them the subject of Gothic terror. Without such treatment, Lovecraft’s entities are the stuff of science fiction pure and simple. The latter is what we have in THE CURSE. (THE CURSE II, III, and IV, by the way, haven’t a thing to do with either Lovecraft or THE CURSE.)

THE UNNAMABLE (based, of course, on Lovecraft’s “The Unnameable”), a 1988 release that skipped the box office and went straight to video, continued the surprising trend of making movies from Lovecraft’s minor stories. The film reprises the tale-within-a-tale concerning the legendary father of a misbegotten monster with a curiously flawed eye, who has left his/its ghastly impression on the attic window pane out of which it used to stare.

In Lovecraft’s original, this incident of Colonial lore is the subject of a published tale by Randolph Carter, fictional analogue to HPL himself. He recounts the story to a skeptical friend who calls his stories excessively fanciful. By story’s end, the monster himself shows up to vindicate the truth of the tale.

So with the movie, only Randolph Carter (Mark Kinsey Stephenson) and his friend Howard Damon (Charles King) become undergraduates at Miskatonic University. (Again, more Lovecraftian than Lovecraft!) They eventually explore the local house around which the legend hovers, and (inevitably) attempt to rescue a couple of buxom coeds (Tanya Heller and Wendy Barnes, played by Alexandra Durrell and Laura Albert, respectively) who see the haunted pile only as a likely necking haven. The girls’ stupid jock boyfriends (Joel Manton and John Babcock, played by Mark Parra and Blaine Wheatley, respectively) get finished off first, as one has come to expect from such exorable flicks as this.

The monster (Aldya Winthrop, played by Katrin Alexandre) is on a rampage, and Carter manages to find a for-

Seriously, though, don’t you just hate when this happens? David Gale goes to the head of the class in 1985’s THE RE-ANIMATOR.

It is, perhaps, nostalgia for that mysterious, bygone era, so eloquently described by SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, which has helped perpetuate the fascination with the world of Victorian crime in foggy, gas-lit London. He takes the reader into a world before computers and forensic science; a world in which SHERLOCK HOLMES stands head and shoulders above all other heroes of detective fiction.

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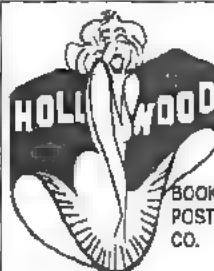
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mula in the University copy of the *Necronomicon* to banish it. Here is the clearest proof, if one needs it, that citations of the *Necronomicon* (which also shows up in 1987's *THE EVIL DEAD II*) and Miskatonic University do not a Lovecraftian story make. Can we really imagine that any film connected with Lovecraft, the Gentleman of Providence, could contain the phrase "big tits"?

One should not, in an article devoted to film adaptations of HPL, include the 1991 HBO telefilm *CAST A DEADLY SPELL* (originally entitled *LOVECRAFT*), but neither can one resist the temptation. Here is an odd experiment, an updating of the old psychic-investigator genre (tangentially brushed by Lovecraft in "The Lurking Fear") into an occult hard-boiled detective story. This has been done before, perhaps most successfully in C.J. Henderson's "You Can't Take It with You" (also published as "Windows of the Soul"), and it works in this case, too.

The setting of *CAST A DEADLY SPELL* is 1940s Los Angeles, where sorcery of all kinds runs riot. (The old techniques were rediscovered in Germany during the Second World War and were promptly used to defeat the Axis.) Now everyone uses magic, at the cost of a slight mortgage on his or her soul. Everyone uses it, that is, except private eye Phil Lovecraft (Fred Ward), who has personal reasons for not touching the stuff. This peculiarity makes him the ideal man for a case in which he must retrieve a magician's stolen copy of the *Necronomicon*—needed urgently, Phil discovers, because the "window" through which the magician (David Warner) hopes to summon the Old Ones is only open a crack and will soon close.

The movie is aswim in occult and Lovecraftian in- and out-jokes. Only one or two are out of place and clumsy; otherwise the humor scarcely seems incompatible with the ritual seriousness with which we take even straight Chandleresque prose/film. There is only a thin line between camp and parody, but so long as one does not trespass that line, all is well. (This is why 1948's *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*, despite its broad comedy, can be viewed as the genuine closing of the Universal monster canon.)

The final dénouement featuring the epiphany of an Old One is surprisingly well handled, though one cannot help noticing that the monster is scarcely more energetic than the rubber octopus in Edward D. Wood's *BRIDE OF THE MONSTER* (1955)!

In 1991, video stores featured two more Lovecraft movies that never made it into theaters. The credits for both carefully claim that the films are only "inspired by" the works of H. P. Lovecraft. (Apparently they don't want to claim too

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78 SCARLET STREET

much. Lovecraft fans have raged at the slightest departure from the text in past adaptations, much as fundamentalists screamed and protested at the liberties taken with the Bible in 1988's *THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST*.)

*CTHULHU MANSION* does not even claim to be inspired by any Lovecraft tale in particular. Nevertheless, it becomes pretty clear pretty quickly which stories the filmmakers had in mind (whether consciously or not): "The Diary of Alonzo Typer" and "The Terrible Old Man". Like the latter, *CTHULHU MANSION* centers on the reckless and soon-to-be-rued attempt of a criminal gang to invade and rob the spooky home of a magically-powerful old man (Frank Finley).

This time it is a retired stage magician, Chandu the Great (a tip of the top hat to Bela Lugosi's old serial character), not an old sea captain. And it is not three local crooks, but a band of obnoxious and vicious drug-smuggling teenagers. They come to a bad end, needless to say.

From the lesser-known collaboration with William Lumley (no relation to Brian), "The Diary of Alonzo Typer", we get the images of some terrible thing, apparently to be identified with Great Cthulhu (so even in Lovecraft), imprisoned in a cellar vault, and the dispatching of an interloper by a pair of monstrous black paws.

The picture has moments of genuine Gothicism and eeriness, though it lacks not its quotient of "doomed-teens-in-haunted-house" movie clichés. It is truly a strange mix.

*THE RESURRECTED* does admit to being inspired by *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, one of Lovecraft's longest and most complex works. Any movie based on

this novella is going to have to do some trimming. What is surprising is how little is lost in the surgery this time around. Most of the plot survives unaltered.

The movie is set in today's Providence, Rhode Island. There is a real but finally token attempt to maintain the novella's antiquarian atmosphere. Ward (Chris Sarandon) is not a student of the past of his beloved colonial Rhode Island and Providence Plantations; rather, he becomes enamored of the past through the simpler expedient of inheriting a trunk full of memorabilia from an obscure ancestor. He discovers that he is the descendent of the sorcerer Joseph Curwen (also Chris Sarandon), and any Lovecraft reader knows the rest. Here, Ward is replaced physically by Curwen, as in Lovecraft's original, not just psychically supplanted, as in *THE HAUNTED PALACE*.

One is tempted to cry "foul!" as soon as one notices that here, as in *CAST A DEADLY SPELL*, we have a Lovecraftian hard-boiled private eye (John Terry). But remember, please, purists, that the story is the "case" of Charles Dexter Ward. The unnamed and undeveloped implied narrator of the original must be some sort of law officer or detective. The film quite naturally takes the simple liberty of drawing this narrator into the story as a character. (The



Dr. Pretorious (Ted Sorel) stretches a point (and his head) in 1986's *FROM BEYOND*.



It was much more romantic when Paul Henreid and Bette Davis did it in *NOW, VOYAGER*. Private Eye Lovecraft (Fred Ward) gives a light to an otherworldly chum in 1991's *CAST A DEADLY SPELL*.

implied investigator has been merged with the novella's snooping Dr. Willett.)

Whence Charles Dexter Ward's wife? Another superfluous love interest? Have no fear. You see, writer Brent V. Friedman must have seen the difficulty Lovecraft left open (and was able to leave open because of his nonvisual medium): Namely, how could the mature Curwen pass for the stripling Ward? Granted, Curwen remains preternaturally youthful, but even so he seems a man in his prime, whereas Ward is scarcely out of high school. For Ward to be old enough, his parents, whose worries introduce Dr. Willett into the story, must be out of the picture. The natural substitute is a wife, Claire (Jane Sibbett), for Ward. That said, she does little to intrude.

Reviewing *THE HAUNTED PALACE*, critic John Stanley remarked that the brief glimpse of one of Curwen's experimental pit creatures (or Deep Ones, or Old Ones?) was probably the most effective thing in the movie. That may be so again. Modern special effects certainly do Lovecraft's implied horrors adequate justice in *THE RESURRECTED*, with the half-formed thing fished out of Narraganset Bay being weirdly chilling. (Lovecraft fans are advised not to blink, because otherwise they will miss the film's clever cross-references to "Pickman's Model", "The Rats in the Walls", and the fragment "Evil Sorceries".)

Let's close with a peek at a Lovecraft adaptation that might have been but never was. Lin Carter, who was at one point emboldened by producer Milton Subotsky's efforts to adapt a couple of his Thongor novels to movie-length cartoon format for production in the Soviet Union, once plotted a movie version of "The Shadow over Innsmouth". As he told it to me, he was in the talking stages with a producer, though it never came to anything.

In a scene that would have had Lovecraft purists howling for his blood (after his error-riddled 1992 *Lovecraft: A Look behind the Cthulhu Mythos*, published by Borgo Press, they were, anyway!), Carter planned a climactic sequence in which the finny hordes of the Deep Ones swarmed up out of Devil's Reef in the moonlight while a couple of courageous professors from Miskatonic University stood on a nearby hilltop, one on his knees, arms held out, before the other, also with arms extended. Both men would be clutching talismanic star stones (the bane of the Old Ones in August Derleth's tales), the second man wearing a fifth star stone strapped to his forehead. The five relics thus forming a great star between them, they would glow with the power of the Elder Gods and emanate destruction for the ichthyic monsters below. But it was not to be, probably to no one's real regret.





# Howard Duff Remembers THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE

Article and Interview by  
Mark Dawidziak

strong cast (Burt Lancaster, Hume Cronyn, Charles Bickford, and a few others capable of blasting a confident young newcomer off the screen). Duff had held his own in pretty intimidating company. You couldn't ask for more from a film debut, right?

Emboldened by his good fortune, Duff isn't at all displeased to learn that playwright Lillian Hellman is at the party. You don't have to be a faithful reader of Louella's column to know that Hellman is the close "friend" of mystery writer Dashiell Hammett, the creator of Sam Spade. The relationship between Hammett and Hellman is such that you put the word *friend* in quotes, even when said aloud. They are, of course, more than friends, though less than constant companions.

If anyone can claim to know Hammett, however, it is his "friend" Lillian Hellman. The opportunity is too good for Duff, who has never met Hammett. There is a question he has to ask.

Duff gets his chance when a mutual acquaintance introduces him to Hellman. The actor makes small talk while working up to the question. "Well," he thinks to himself, "the show's been on a couple of years, and we're bright and successful. Go ahead and ask."

"What does Mr. Hammett think of our show?" Duff hears himself saying.

"Dash?" Hellman replies. "Oh, I don't think he's ever heard it."

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More than 40 years after his encounter with Lillian Hellman, Howard Duff would summarize the incident in six words: "Put me right in my place." Though Hellman was unquestionably proficient at putting people in their places, she undoubtedly was being brutally honest with the actor who had achieved fame as Sam Spade. To the best of her knowledge, Dashiell Hammett did not monitor the radio life of his famous detective. Although conversations with others suggest Hammett at least sampled *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE*, it's fairly certain that, except as a source of income, the three radio series featuring his characters were of little interest to the mystery writer.

Yet if Hammett had given more than a passing listen to Duff as Spade, he might have been pleasantly surprised. *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* may have strayed from the tone and tenor of *The Maltese Falcon*, but it was a detective show that seemed as fresh and different as Hammett's short stories had been to the pulp pages of *Black Mask* magazine. It was tough and taut and funny. You had to listen carefully, because Duff and the writers didn't always take themselves very seriously. At its best, *THE AD-*

**H**oward Duff, who became a star as the radio voice of detective Sam Spade, died of a heart attack on July 9, 1990. He was 76. A few months before his death, Duff agreed to a lengthy interview about his involvement with *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE*. The actor cheerfully recounted tales of the series and his interpretation of the role.

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The air is heavy with smoke and laughter. It is the type of Hollywood party that you might read about the next day in Louella Parson's column. The glittering cast includes several of Tinseltown's brightest stars. Behind the mixed drinks and hors d'oeuvres, you can also find some of the industry's most powerful producers, directors, and writers. Some are there to see; more are hoping to be seen.

Making his way through the clatter of conversation and cocktail glasses, young Howard Duff is feeling rather good about himself. And why not? He's earned a place at this party. Though many people might not know his face, most would recognize his name and his voice. After two years on the air, the actor's *ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* is one of radio's hottest series.

People are even beginning to know his face. Hearing Duff as Spade during the detective show's first season, the late columnist-turned-producer Mark Hellinger had remarked, "If this guy looks anything like he sounds, we've got the right guy for our film." Pleased to see that Duff had rugged good looks to go with the rugged voice, Hellinger had cast him in *BRUTE FORCE*, a prison picture released in 1947 — about a year ago. All right, so Duff didn't exactly have top billing. Okay, he didn't exactly have sixth billing, either. But it was a strong role in a strong movie with a

VENTURES OF SAM SPADE blazed at a lightning pace along a fine line somewhere between hard-boiled drama and satire.

The man responsible for spinning Sam Spade from the pages of *The Maltese Falcon* into a weekly series was veteran radio editor, director, and producer William Spier. When *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* premiered as a CBS Friday-night summer series on July 12, 1946, Spier was already considered one of radio's most seasoned campaigners. His credits, which started in 1929, included producing *THE MARCH OF TIME* and directing the CBS classic *SUSPENSE*.

Spier, still overseeing *SUSPENSE*, assigned the writing team of Bob Tallman and Ann Lorraine the task of cooking up weekly capers for San Francisco detective Sam Spade, hero of the third of Hammett's five novels. But who could possibly play Spade? Humphrey Bogart was justifiably identified with the character after his marvelous portrayal in director John Huston's 1941 film version of *The Maltese Falcon*. It was indeed a hard hard boiled act to follow.

The magic seemed to be in the voice of Howard Duff, a young actor who, although only a year in Hollywood, was beginning to make a name for himself in supporting roles on major radio dramas. There was a hard edge to Duff's delivery that Spier thought would be perfect for Spade.

Until his senior year at Seattle's Roosevelt High, Duff was planning on a career as a cartoonist. Drawing characters was replaced by playing characters when he

was cast in a school play. In addition to working with local theater groups, he landed jobs as an announcer at a Seattle radio station. When the United States entered World War Two, Duff began a four-year stint as a correspondent for Armed Forces Radio. He hit Hollywood in 1945.

"Bill Spier knew me," Duff recalled, "so he auditioned me along with other so-called leading men. I got lucky."

Still, the 28-year-old Duff knew he would fail if he merely tried to imitate Bogart. "I think they wanted me to more or less do a Bogart impersonation at first," Duff said. "And I didn't cotton to that. I wanted to do it in my own way. Luckily, we got by with that. Bogart did it pretty straight with wonderful touches of humor. We went a little further than that."

*THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* was an immediate hit on the CBS Friday lineup. There was no doubt that the network would find a place for it on the fall schedule. On September 29, 1946, Duff and Sam Spade moved into the Sunday-night time slot, where they stayed for the rest of their immensely popular CBS run.

During its entire five-year existence, *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* was sponsored by Wildroot Cream Oil ("America's favorite family hair tonic"). The cases, referred to as capers, were wildly different, but the format pretty much stayed the same. Some fast paced dialogue between Sam and his giddy secretary, Effie Perrine (Lurene Tuttle in the role played by Lee Patrick in the Huston film), would set up the week's caper. This usually would be the start of Sam dictating a report for Effie to type, so Duff would bounce between narrating the story and playing off the other actors.

Once Sam had hooked Effie's (and the listeners') interest, announcer Dick Joy would jump into the usual introduction: "Dashiell Hammett, America's leading detective fiction writer and creator of Sam Spade, the hard-boiled private eye, and William Spier, radio's outstanding producer/director of mystery and crime drama, join their talents to make your hair stand on end with *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE*, presented by the makers of Wildroot Cream Oil for the hair."

Like *THE FAT MAN* and *THE THIN MAN* radio shows, *SAM SPADE* loudly hinted that Hammett was in some way directly responsible for the series' content. The ploy worked. Many believed that the writer contributed scripts and plot ideas. In truth, Hammett had no input beyond the creation of Sam Spade.

Duff and Tuttle were the series' only billed regulars, although Jerry Housner did make appearances as Sam's lawyer, Sid Weiss. Several actors — including Elliot Reid (the detective who falls for Jane Russell in *GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES*), Hal March, Joe Kearns, Peggy



Cliver Pictures

**ABOVE:** Spade's creator, Dashiell Hammett. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Howard Duff and Marta Toren in *ILLEGAL ENTRY* (1949).







Radio's **THE ADVENTURES OF SAME SPADE** starred Howard Duff as Sam and Lurene Tuttle as secretary Effie Perrine, the roles played in the 1941 production of *The Maltese Falcon* by Humphrey Bogart and Lee Patrick.

Webber, John McIntire, and Jeanette Nolan—often appeared in a variety of roles. The Spade show was a double pleasure for McIntire. The program was one of his first regular jobs in Hollywood, and it allowed him to work with his wife, Nolan. (McIntire and Nolan would costar on *THE VIRGINIAN* during the NBC Western's 1967-1968 season.) "We had kind of a little stock company," Duff said, "and, as far as I'm concerned, we had the best people around at that time."

Faithful listeners could tell you that Sam's detective license number was 137596. (In the Academy Award Theatre production of *The Maltese Falcon*—aired the same month as *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* premiere—Bogart gave Spade's license number as 357896.)

Ann Lorraine left the series soon after its debut, and Gil Doud became Bob Tallman's partner in crime scripts. After the first two years, many of the writing duties fell to the prolific E. Jack Neuman and John Michael Hayes, who wrote scripts separately and as collaborators.

"Spier and the writers charted the course of where we were going," Duff remembered, "and we went in some pretty crazy directions. But we could try different things because we were on every week of the year—52 shows a year. With radio, of course, you didn't have to worry about makeup and lights. You were just concentrating on the sound and the voice, so it was a simpler process than television. But it's possibly a little more interesting and challenging process for people who went to use their imaginations."

"Another thing a lot of people don't remember or don't realize is that we were doing those shows live, at least for the first four years. We couldn't record anything until Bing Crosby made it possible, because, until he insisted on taping his shows, everybody thought you had to go on live. We'd do a show live for the East, and then another

one later for the West. Two identical shows, each done live. All kinds of things went wrong all the time. But we were pretty good at ad-libs. We covered when we had to."

By the time the Sam Spade radio show surfaced, the hard-boiled detective hero had been around for more than 20 years. Spier thought it would be death to approach the genre in a deadly serious manner, particularly on a weekly basis. The conventions of the form were too well known. Spier stripped away the darker aspects of Spade's character and left the wisecracking humor. The spirit of his series was closer to the lighthearted lunacy of *The Thin Man* than the considerably starker nature of *The Maltese Falcon*.

Sure, there was plenty of action. The mystery might be pretty good, too. The writers, though, punched up the proceedings with bad puns, goofy *non sequiturs*, and outrageous situations. The result, wrote radio historian Jim Harmon in his *Great Radio Heroes* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), was a series "that still seems fresh and alive".

Indeed, *THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE* anticipated many of the innovations that would win acclaim for television series of later decades. Spade indulged in the campy humor that would later become the stock-in-trade of TV's *BATMAN*. There was the type of straight faced, off-the-wall lampooning that made Leslie Nielsen's *POLICE SQUAD* a critical favorite. And Duff sometimes broke the theater's invisible fourth wall, delivering a line recognizing that his Spade was a fictional character. This device, used by everyone from Bob Hope to Bugs Bunny, George Burns to Garry Shandling, won attention for such TV series as *MOONLIGHTING* and *IT'S GARRY SHANDLING'S SHOW*.

In one episode, Effie tried coaxing a story out of Sam: "Don't you feel like talking about it?"

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Two 1940s hard-boiled icons: Dana Andrews (LAURA) and Howard Duff (SAM SPADE) in *WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS* (1956).

"Frankly, no," Sam shot back, "but it's expected of me." Sam once dismissed another private detective by suggesting that he "get his own program."

When Sam did start to relate the details of a caper, you could hear the clank of liquor bottle against glasses. Effie once acknowledged the bottle kept in Sam's bottom drawer by telling her boss that he should "unbourbon" himself.

During *THE DRY MARTINI CAPER*, Sam asked a suspect why she hadn't gone upstairs to get her "alibi shaped up". It was the type of cynical put-down that also would have suited Bogart's Spade.

However, not all the lines were snappy and clever. Some were just dumb. While setting up *THE BLUEBEARD CAPER*, Effie asked Sam what he was doing at the Cow Palace. "Oh, just bulling around," he answered. It was a good thing that the dialogue moved fast enough to leave such groaners behind quickly.

Howard Duff was teamed with then-wife Ida Lupino in several films, including *WOMEN'S PRISON* (1955).



"We were about as hip as you could be in those days," Duff said. "I think we were kind of ahead of our time. That's why the few shows I've listened to lately don't embarrass me. I'm always surprised if anything is successful. Even as young as I was, I was surprised. But we all kind of knew we had a great show. We thought we were pretty good. We were just happy that people agreed with us."

"Mostly, we were having a good time doing it and we were hoping that the audience was sharing in the good time. That's apparently what happened for a few years."

Almost everyone who worked on Sam Spade remembers it as a dizzy good time. "It wasn't labor," said Hayes, who moved to Los Angeles in 1948 and soon was contributing scripts to both *SAM SPADE* and *SUSPENSE*. "*SAM SPADE* was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. Bill Spier was an urbane, witty, and very knowledgeable guy. He was an employer and a teacher. And Howard Duff was just marvelous—very easygoing, never temperamental, firm but very professional. Lurene was a dear. She had the happiest voice. The only unhappy experience was being low paid."

Duff's Spade didn't mind tickling his own image. When Effie told Sam he was wonderful and trusting, the detective took refuge in his radio press material. "I am not wonderful and trusting," he announced. "I am a hard-boiled private eye... and I'm also two-fisted."

"My attitude was kind of hard boiled and smart-assed," Duff explained. "It was a combination of good showmanship and good delivery that put it over."

Duff's Spade had a wisecrack for every occasion, which was handy because he had to deal with more than his share of bizarre characters and bizarre situations. In *THE FLOPSY-MOPSY COTTONTAIL CAPER*, for instance, Sam had to attend a costume party dressed as a giant white rabbit with shocking-pink ears.

"We did some rather outrageous things sometimes," Duff said, "especially during the summertime when the writers were getting a little dinky. We were all getting a little dinky. So we had a two-headed guy in the shower singing harmony *a capella*. Other characters were almost Dickensian. Bill Spier had quite an antic sense of humor. I thought they went too far quite a few times, but it was basically a fun time for all of us."

Neuman and Hayes remember what it was like writing for the radio treadmill. "It was the opportunity of a lifetime for us," Neuman said. "Howard was a rising young star, and we were working with the happiest group in the world. I really looked forward to writing those scripts. It was wide open. You could do anything with a *SAM SPADE* script. You could do tragedy, comedy, suspense, action, satire, farce. You could do high drama or burlesque, or both. That's why they were so much fun to write."

"We had a lot of double entendres," Hayes said. "We vied with each other to see how we could spice things up."

Neuman got started in radio a little before Hayes. After cutting his mystery teeth on a few *SUSPENSE* scripts, Neuman quit his job as a CBS staff writer to devote his energies to *SAM SPADE* episodes. A little later, he discovered that

Hayes, also a SAM SPADE contributor, was living in the same Sherman Oaks apartment building.

"I had been writing for Lucille Ball's radio show, the one with Richard Denning," Hayes said. "I moved over to SAM SPADE because there was room to do comedy and drama and tongue-in-cheek material. Jack and I were writing scripts separately, but then we started to help each other out with plots."

Stairway encounters sometimes developed into therapy sessions for blocked plots.

"I've got a guy who's so smart," Neuman would tell Hayes.

"How smart is he?" Hayes would ask.

"Well, he graduated from Harvard at the age of nine," his friend would explain. "He speaks five languages. He has degrees from several universities. He's the recognized expert on certain codes and extinct languages."

"That's pretty smart," Hayes would concede. "Okay, what's the problem?"

And, soon, the problem would be licked. It was a short and natural step to collaboration. Sometimes Hayes would write the first act, and Neuman would take over for the conclusion.

In the spring of 1949, Spier and his wife, actress June Havoc, decided on a summer vacation in Europe.

"Spier told us he wanted all of the SAM SPADE and SUSPENSE scripts for the rest of the year done before he left," Neuman recalled. "So, starting in April, John and I wrote one a day until we had the entire order finished. And you know what? It wasn't as tough as it sounds."

"We were young and reliable and very professional," Hayes said. "We were full of life and creative energy and the desire to pay the rent."

This sense of fun and enthusiasm is evident in the crisp SAM SPADE scripts.

"One night, I went to see a picture called D.O.A. (a 1949 thriller with Edmond O'Brien trying to find out who slipped him a slow-acting poison)," Hayes said. "I got such a rush from its breathless pace that I went home and tried to write something that just wouldn't stop—completely breathless. I started at 11:30 P.M. and finished it at 4 A.M. Then I drove out to Bill Spier's house and left it in his mailbox. That's how we felt about the show."

The players on the SAM SPADE team enjoyed the work and each other's company. Spier produced and directed the episodes. During his absences, Doud would fill in as director. Lud Gluskin was the show's musical director.

Dick Joy would kick things off with the familiar preamble: "The adventures of Sam Spade, detective, brought to you by Wildroot Cream Oil hair tonic, the nonalcoholic hair tonic that contains lanolin, and new Wildroot Liquid Cream Shampoo." Sam Spade was billed as "the greatest private eye of them all" and Wildroot was billed as "again and again, the choice of men who put good grooming first."

The series had incredibly wide appeal. It was an action drama for men and kids. It was a comedy for those who preferred their mystery entertainment a little cockeyed. And Duff had become a heartthrob for female listeners. Years after the show left the air, young women would stop Duff and ask him to repeat the program's sign-off line to them: "Good night, sweetheart."

"There was a warmth to Howard Duff's voice that wasn't in Bogart's performance," Hayes said. Comple-

menting Duff's smart-aleck humor was Tuttle's Effie, always bubbly and often vague. "Lurene Tuttle was one of the sweetest people you'd ever want to meet," Neuman said, "but she was about as quick as a park bench. She never understood the double entendres. She just walked right into the jokes, wide-eyed as could be, which made her portrayal all the more effective."

About 40 years after the series left the air, mystery fans still remember it fondly. William Link, cocreator of COLUMBO and MURDER, SHE WROTE, was a Philadelphia youngster growing up on a diet of magic and mystery when THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE hit the airwaves. "It was way above average," he said. "The humor was on the highest level, and Duff sounded more authentic than most radio private eyes. But it was the humor that made it special. Tallman and Doud were my favorite radio mystery writers. They went on to do THE SCARLET QUEEN, a summer show that few people remember, which is a shame, because it was terrific."

Link and the late Richard Levinson became television's most successful mystery team. They would win two Emmys, a Peabody Award, and four Edgar Allan Poe Awards from the Mystery Writers of America. Link's appreciation of Tallman and Doud is shaped by his two vantage points—that of a voracious reader of mysteries and that of a practitioner in the field.

"For me, writing a SAM SPADE script was the easiest thing in the world," Neuman said. "For one thing, Gil Doud and Bob Tallman did such a good job of establishing the show. Another reason was that you started with character, not plot. The plot worked out of the characters. That kind of writing you look forward to doing. I'd give anything to do just one more."

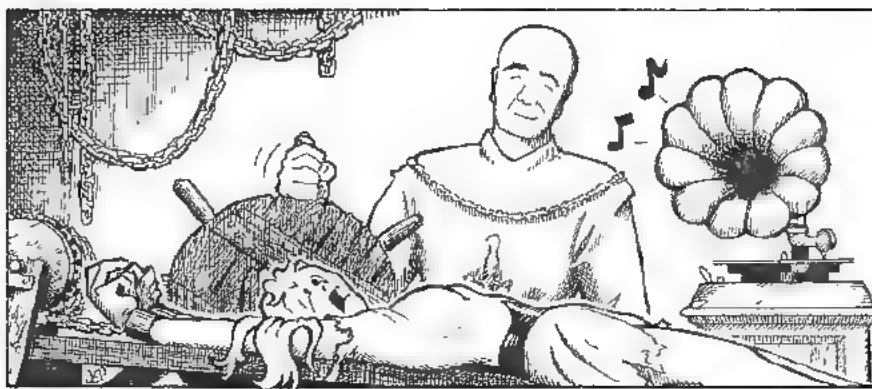
What did Hammett think of all this? He apparently gave it little consideration, even though many columnists believed that he wrote episodes and supervised production. For this reason, the *Daily Compass* expressed concern that he would allow an anti-Semitic remark to slip into one episode. Admitting that he hadn't listened to THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE lately, Hammett promised to pay closer attention. The radio show benefited from the implication that Hammett was involved, but the truth was that the writer didn't know or care what kind of Sam Spade show was being broadcast by CBS.

The money was fantastic. Producer Edward J. Rosenberg had worked out a lucrative deal for SAM SPADE and for the development of THE FAT MAN, a series created by Hammett. "My sole duty in regard to these programs is to look in the mail for a check once a week," Hammett said. "I don't even listen to them. If I did, I'd complain about how they were being handled, and then I'd fall into the trap of being asked to come down and help. I don't want to have anything to do with the radio. It's a dizzy world—makes the movies seem highly intellectual."

If Hammett wasn't interested in fighting for quality radio shows, he was prepared to battle for the rights to his literary creations. Warner Bros., having made three film versions of *The Maltese Falcon*, believed it owned all rights to the story and the character. The studio contended that the radio show was an unauthorized use of the character. Hammett argued that Warner Bros. had purchased only the motion-picture rights. While the case dragged in the courts, the radio series continued.

*Continued on page 108*





# Record Rack

by Ross Care

**THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS:** Original soundtrack. Danny Elfman. Time 61:18. Walt Disney Records CD 60855-2. Also available on cassette.

Unique as it is in many ways, **THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS** nonetheless fulfills the general expectations for a Tim Burton film: bizarre, often breathtaking style and effects, not much attention to character and structure (someone once observed that "If **BATMAN RETURNS** again, he'd better bring along a plot"), and a Danny Elfman score. The visuals in **NIGHTMARE** are some of Burton's most stunning, transcending expectations even for him in this area, and the model animation sets new technical standards for the art, capturing in stop-motion the throwaway fluidity that Disney's cel animators achieved with human action in such films as **ALICE IN WONDERLAND** (1951) and **PETER PAN** (1953). But Burton has yet to match Disney's subtle mastery of story and personality development, nor, apparently, has he learned much from the vintage Disney's judicious use of songs and production numbers. Elfman's aggressively foregrounded score mirrors the film's overall strengths and weaknesses.

**NIGHTMARE** may be one of the strangest mainstream movies ever made. In spite of its structural problems, I liked parts of it a lot. There are many genuinely magical moments and some wonderfully droll horror gags and references. Musically, Elfman does not go beyond the expected, however, and his score is a mixed bag—which probably will neither disappoint fans nor win over detractors. There are two good numbers for the pivotal holiday sequences: the intricately staged opening, "This is Halloween", a compulsive and compulsively

catchy number (even if it does tend to evoke your 113th trip through the Haunted Mansion) and "What's This?", Jack's buoyant neoclassic miniaria for his equally spectacular discovery of Christmastown (also the score's most memorable tune).

However, the subsequent score is something of a downward spiral musically, in part because of the nature of the property itself. Jack Skellington, the Pumpkin King obsessed with usurping Christmas, is a loquacious sort, and more prone than Hamlet to soliloquies; in other words, he does go on. His meditative numbers ("Jack's Lament", "Jack's Obsession", etc.) are among the weaker moments in both score and film, and neither plot nor score seems capable of sustaining the lengths it takes for Jack to interminably come to terms with

Christmas and himself. A single introspective ode would probably have been enough.

One suspects that Walt himself would never have allowed so many plot-stopping (padding?) solos, and Burton's hard-sell highlighting of Elfman's tunes made me nostalgic for the classic Disney period when even melodically unforgettable songs (which most of those in **NIGHTMARE** aren't) were given concentrated vocal treatments and then developed in the instrumental score. Though they are visually charming, there's not much depth to Burton's characters, and neither Elfman's consistently literal lyrics nor his monotonous, Michael Crawford clone singing voice for Jack do much to infuse warmth, empathy, and motivation into cast or plot.

Perhaps worse, **NIGHTMARE** boasts no compelling villain or central conflict. "Oogie Boogie's Song" is hot (and **TRON**-like) visually but lukewarm musically, with pointedly unfunny, pseudo-"black" lyrics performed by a rather desultory bad-guy character. Many of the lyrics throughout are curiously humorless. **NIGHTMARE** might have been better served by Tim (EVITA/CHESS) Rice (who provided some of the wittier lyrics for **ALADDIN**) as lyricist, freeing Elfman to concentrate on better tunes and score. As it is, the underscoring is standard Elfman; frequently lyrical and ethereal, but derivative (here smacking of vanilla-flavored Tchaikovsky and Weill) and, well, sort of bland. It's beautifully orchestrated, though, as are all of Elfman's film scores. Three arrangers—musical director Steve Bartek, Mark McKenzie, and Mark Mann (also cited for "music preparation")—are credited.

Admittedly, if you're not familiar with or addicted to the great works of musical comedy (from vintage film musicals such



Sally and Jack Skellington in **TIM BURTON'S THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS**.

as 1933's 42ND STREET and 1943's THE GANG'S ALL HERE through the great Broadway era of the 1950s), you may appreciate the NIGHTMARE score more than I can. Indeed, you might even love it, as millions have gone gaga over the equally generic Menken/Ashman scores for Disney. Perhaps film and Broadway scoring, and 90s music in general, have become

so melodically and emotionally impoverished that works such as these are perceived as great instances of pop culture. (It's been said that each era gets the art, and I guess that includes the popular art, that it deserves).

Finally (apropos of nothing much), has anyone noted that Jack Skellington (or a close relation) appears to have made his film debut as an ornament on

Michael Keaton's hat in one of the climactic scenes of BEETLEJUICE?

*Ross Care is a composer, M.I.D.I. musician, and author. His short film scores include OTTO MESSMER AND FELIX THE CAT and THE WIZARD'S SON. He recently completed articles on Alex North and Cole Porter for the Library of Congress.*

**VAMPIRE CIRCUS** (featuring THE RETURN OF DRACULA): The Essential Vampire Theme Collection. Silva America / Silva Screen Records. Time: 75:16. Catalogue No.: SSD 1020. \$16.95

Grab your capes and your headphones and be prepared to sink your teeth into VAMPIRE CIRCUS, the album. This compilation features over an hour of theme music culled from various vampire films, including the 1971 classic from Hammer Studios.

Fans of Hammer films will recognize the album right away, as it uses a portion of the VAMPIRE CIRCUS movie poster as its cover (Anthony Corlan in all his fanged glory!). Although the album is titled VAMPIRE CIRCUS, the largest piece of text on the cover is the word "Dracula" in red. It's a brilliant marketing ploy, considering the success of Coppola's version of Dracula.

Sound quality on this disc varies. The tracks from newer films tend to have little hiss or be totally hiss-free. Music from older films, such as the Jack Palance DRACULA (1973), have the usual amount of hiss for recordings made before Dolby noise reduction.

Graphically, the CD booklet is laid out quite well, although sparse in

And lend  
an ear . . .



photographs, the only color photo being that of Monique Gabrielle from TRANSYLVANIA TWIST (1991). The text, unfortunately, is less than inspiring. It manages to tell you who starred in what film and who composed the music, but it reads as if written at the last minute. ("An excellent score by Daniel Licht is highlighted by his dark pledge to Satan." Say again?)

What really shines, as it should, is the selection of music. Ranging from the classic ("Overture" to 1958's THE RETURN OF DRACULA, in which Gerald Fried makes use—as does VAMPIRE CIRCUS—of the traditional "Dies irae", based on Gregorian chants) to the most recent ("The Bloodsucker's Ball" from 1992's CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT), each track is taken directly from the original film

soundtrack, whenever possible, excepting only the VAMPIRE CIRCUS "Prologue" and "The Flower Duet" from the opera LAKME, which was used as the seduction theme in THE HUNGER (1983). In these two cases, new recordings were made especially for this anthology.

Truly, something for every type of vampire fan can be found here, as this collection embraces both the sublime and the ridiculous—the ridiculous being TRANSYLVANIA 6-5000 (1985). However, the real highlights, aside from the wonderfully hiss-free new recording of the VAMPIRE CIRCUS "Prologue", are Brian May's "Vampire Ceremony and Initiation Ritual" from THIRST (1979), Fred Mollin's theme from the FOREVER KNIGHT television series, and, for the first time on

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any audio-only medium, the instrumental version of Brad Fiedel's "Come To Me" from *FRIGHT NIGHT* (1985).

Overall, the entire package is a worthwhile investment. For fans of soundtrack music, or for anyone who wants to add a chill to his or her music collection, *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* is highly recommended. For vampire fans, this is a "must-have" item.

—Roman Gheesling

**FALLEN ANGELS:** Original soundtrack. Time: 57:40. Verve. CD 314 519 903-2.

**FALLEN ANGELS**, Showtime's six-part experiment in film noir, burnt out faster than a private eye with the hots for an ice-cold blonde, but for lovers of the genre and the jazz that often accompanies it, Verve's soundtrack CD should prove hard to resist.

Actually, the disc features only two original tracks: Teddy Edwards' irresistible "Main Title Theme" and Elmer Bernstein's equally atmospheric "End Title Theme." Between those two doom-laden points, Verve lines up an all-star collection of jazz (and nonjazz) greats, including Billie Holiday with "A Fine Romance" and "Yesterdays", Dinah Washington with "My Heart Cries for You", Benny Carter with "The Song Is You", and Stan Getz jammin' like mad with "All the Things You Are". Even Patti Page, the Singing Rage, turns up, warbling "Why Don't You Believe Me" with the Jack Rael Orchestra.

**FALLEN ANGELS**, the show, may not be able to get up, but its soundtrack makes for lively, if often appropriately melancholy, listening.

—Drew Sullivan

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Scott Bakula

**QUANTUM LEAP:** Original soundtrack. Time: 65:45. GNP/Crescendo. CD GNPD 8036.

Theorizing that one could time travel within his own lifetime, Dr. Sam Beckett led a unique group of scientists into the desert to develop a top-secret project known as Quantum Leap. Pressured to prove his theories or lose funding, Dr. Beckett prematurely stepped into the project accelerator—and vanished! He awoke to find himself in the past, suffering from partial amnesia and facing a mirror image that was not his own... Trapped in the past, Dr. Beckett finds himself leaping from life to life, putting things right that once went wrong and hoping each time that his next leap will be the leap home.

Sound familiar, Leapers? Yes, that classic introduction is on the disk. In fact, with its Mike Post theme (with and without Deborah Pratt's narration), its Velton Ray Bunch underscore suites (from such great episodes as *THE LEAP HOME* and *LEAPING ON A STRING*), its Scott Bakula vocals (including John Lennon's "Imagine" and a medley from the Mitch Leigh/Joe Darion score for *MAN OF LA MANCHA*), and its Dean Stockwell rap number (from the pleasingly-titled episode *SHOCK THEATRE*), this is a soundtrack as varied as the late, lamented television series that spawned it.

Bakula isn't just another series star with a yen to warble—in most cases, "wobble"—a tune. In 1988, the actor, who currently pops up regularly on *MURPHY BROWN*, received a Tony nomination for his starring role in the Broadway musical *ROMANCE/ROMANCE*. Among his other theater credits: the musicals *3 GUYS NAKED* and *FROM THE WAIST DOWN* and *NITE CLUB CONFIDENTIAL*.

**QUANTUM LEAP** was one of those rare network sci fi flavored series that actually lasted longer than a single season. (It notched up 97 shows, in fact; more episodes than the original *STAR TREK*.) The variety and quality of its music, and the genuine charm of its two stars (which translates well to this disk), had more than a little to do with the program's success. If you liked **QUANTUM LEAP** the show, you'll like **QUANTUM LEAP** the soundtrack. Hell, it even made me break my rule never to listen to another rendition of "The Impossible Dream"....

—Drew Sullivan



Tom Cruise at the Chicago Film Festival

## UPDATE: INTERVIEW

*Continued from page 23*

pronounced dead at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Beverly Hills in the early hours of November 1st. The young star of *STAND BY ME* (1986), *RUNNING ON EMPTY* (1988), and *MY OWN PRIVATE IDAHO* (1991) was a month away from reporting to the *INTERVIEW* set, giving the production team time to find a replacement in Christian Slater (who, the *Star* dutifully reported, had once gotten Phoenix to attend an AA meeting with him), but it was nevertheless a shock that stunned all of Hollywood—for a week or two. (Much to his credit, Slater intends to donate his *INTERVIEW* salary to River Phoenix's favorite charity.)

Then came the Day of Revelation, when both *HARD COPY* on the boob tube and the *National Enquirer* in the A&P blew the lid off Winston's shocking transformation of Cruise, and Anne Rice fanatics finally understood who the filmmakers had wanted as Lestat all along—Linda Blair in her old *EXORCIST* makeup!

To be continued ...

—Drew Sullivan



# ARON IN WONDERLAND

## Part Two

Aron Kincaid  
Interviewed by  
Kevin G. Shinnick

Born Norman Neale Williams in California, actor/artist Aron Kincaid has seen a lot of changes in both the state of the state and the state of the motion-picture industry he loves. Currently voicing the character of Killer Croc on Fox's **BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES**, Aron lent his versatile tones to an interview with *Scarlet Street*, taking us to the Mount Sinai of Cecil B. DeMille's **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**, the sun-drenched beaches and cobwebby mansions of American International's teen/horror flicks, the fly-by-night shenanigans of Texas filmmaking, the glamour and glitz of a great big Hollywood premiere, and the dark, rain-swept alleys of a cartoon Gotham City. Join us for the conclusion of our fascinating talk . . .

**SS:** Boris Karloff was also in *THE GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI*.

**AK:** He was added afterwards. (Laughs) Pretty funny for the guy who starred in the movie to be added afterwards—but that was the only way they could salvage that turkey. I think he was there for a week; I'm not sure. We shot in Producer's Studio, which later became Raleigh Studios. I was doing some additional stuff on the stage next door when he was working, and I came by. I was introduced to him. He had been introduced at that point to about 20 people in the last hour, and he didn't even know I was in the movie, I think. I *did* get a chance to talk to him. Just briefly, though.

**SS:** What can you tell us about him?

**AK:** The man's eyes were hypnotic. Whereas Vincent Price's twinkled, his were almost hypnotic. And the color of his skin was strange, almost like some metal alloy or something. This green-gold, brown color. I asked the fellow, Jerry Neely I guess it was, "Is he Indian?" "Well, supposedly, but they never want to talk about that." Was he Indian? Do you know?

**SS:** According to some books, but that's never been confirmed.

**AK:** He was huge, too, as I recall. I know in *FRANKENSTEIN* he was built up, but I guess he seemed tall because he was so thin. A friend of mine, Tim O'Kelly, was in *TARGETS* with him.

**SS:** He played the sniper.

**AK:** Now why the hell didn't more happen with Tim O'Kelly? Anyway, everybody who worked with Karloff was crazy about him. The same could be said of Vincent Price and Basil Rathbone. I have never heard anything negative about any of those people from anyone in this town, and I've lived here my whole life. I've heard people tear apart John Wayne and Charlton Heston and Doris Day—I've heard stories you'd never be able to print about all of them—but about those three men? Nothing.

**SS:** They were gentlemen.

**AK:** Yeah. We were going to get Vincent to come to this reunion thing that we had.

**SS:** The beach-party reunion?

**AK:** Yeah. We wanted Vincent, but I said, "Why put him on the spot? He'd feel as if he had to come." I just didn't think it was right to ask him. Sam Arkoff was there, and the rest of 'em, but it was a noisy affair, and Vincent—he's elderly, and his wife had passed away.

**SS:** It sounds like you made the right decision, really.

**AK:** It's funny: I was 25 years old when I met a lot of these people. I was surrounded by a lot of other young people, and we were just that to them—a lot of young people. Had we met under different circumstances—like in *MELVIN AND HOWARD*, out



in the desert or something—I'd probably be in all their wills! That's how fabulous I was as a person. (Laughs) SS: Well, at least you appreciated them. As you said, some of the younger actors didn't even know who Rathbone was!

AK: When I worked on SPARTACUS, I didn't care about Kirk Douglas or John Gavin or Tony Curtis. There was Charles Laughton and Laurence Olivier—there they were every morning. I wasn't hobnobbing. I kept a respectful distance; I mean, I just stood beside them, basically, but I got to overhear everything they said, and I drank it all in like a sponge. I watched their movements, the way they handled their goblets; I watched them when they were unaware of being watched. It was a wonderful experience. I love to be around people who have lived the lives they had. You can't help but have some of it come off. I mean, that's what fans are all about. They realize that, by getting close to the golden idol, some of the gold dust brushes off on them and, you know, it's theirs to keep. No one can take your memories from you. And my brush—what's the plural of brush—brushi?

SS: (Laughs) Brushes.

AK: My brushes with cinema immortality have affected my life in so many wonderful, positive ways. Not to mention the biographies that come out on all of these people later. Like the Olivier book—I never read about so much pain in my life! And agony!

What this man went through for his craft and his art! I never had that sort of ambition, that drive, or that sense of self-sacrifice for a goal. I admire it in him; I wouldn't want it in myself. The fact is, if a blue fairy came with a wand, and said, "You can have all that, but you're gonna have to go through what he went through," there's no way on earth I'd want it.

SS: Seriously?

AK: Yes. What blew my mind was that bit about Danny Kaye. The most unlikely lovers. I mean, I can see Laurence Olivier having an affair; he's British. Richard Burton said that

any guy who came out of the English theater and hadn't had an affair with an older man had something wrong with him—but Danny Kaye!

SS: Let's get back to voice overs....

AK: The best thing about voice overs is that nobody cares what you look like. And it's funny, but now that it doesn't matter I take a greater pride and interest in my personal appearance. I go to a lot of recording sessions in a suit and tie. I guess it's because I used to buy the old *Radio Life* magazine, and the people were all dressed up. Tyrone Power was in a tuxedo at a lot of the tapings, because he was probably on his way to a fabulous din-

AK: ... and Richard Moll ...

SS: Two-Face.

AK: ... and Adrienne Barbeau, who's the Catwoman. And Paul Williams, who really is tiny; he was all dressed in a suit. Overall, you would never guess that we were getting together for a radio show. It looked more like we were going to do an on-camera interview or something. As a matter of fact, that day a photographer came and shot some pictures. We did the typical thing, lined up together. But there's a big gingko tree out in back of this place called the Sound Castle, in this wonderful old L.A. neighborhood. And I told the photographer

that having us all get into the tree and surround Batman would be a good shot; it would get us on all levels. He said, "I can't ask these people to climb a tree!" And I said, "Well, I can!" (Laughs) I said, "I'll get on the top branches; I'm not afraid." So I got them all in the tree, and we got a shot of all of us.

SS: Last year we interviewed Tommy Kirk. He worked at Disney, of course, and then went to AIP.

AK: Yeah, he did several of the AIPs. Tommy never liked any of the work he got, even when he was a kid—that's my feeling. I don't know, though, because I can't speak for him. I do know that they told me that there was no way on earth that he'd come to the beach-party reunion. They said to be prepared for him to just hang the phone up on me. Well, I called, and he said, "Aron! My God, how are you!" I said, "Well, it's only been a quarter of a century," and I told him about the reunion. And he

said, "Well, thank you. I'd love to come." He called back a couple of days later and said, "Should I wear a tie?" I said, "Wear whatever you want." And I told him where to park, so he wouldn't have to deal with valet parking, and he parked his car just at the time that I was parking mine. So we walked to the hotel and sort of caught up on over 25 years, and he couldn't have been nicer. He said, "I know what I'm doing isn't all that exciting." I said, "Tommy, you're earning your keep, you're your own man, and you're happy. That's the most important thing of all, espe-



Aron Kincaid finally saw the light and stopped making movies for American International Pictures, but not before starring in **THE GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI** (1966).

ner party. I get dressed up because it makes me feel clean and pulled together and more in control.

SS: It gives us a whole new image of Killer Croc, that's for sure.

AK: Technically, it would make sense to go in there in a filthy, ripe sweatshirt and barefoot, with toenails that need cutting. But no, I'd rather go in a nice designer suit and a crisp, white shirt and a necktie. They did one BATMAN show with all the villains together. I went in, and there was Mark Hamill, who plays The Joker, and Paul Williams ...

SS: He's *The Penguin*.



**ABOVE: The 1985 Beach Party Reunion.** Top row: Dwayne Hickman, Frankie Avalon, Fabian, Paul Gleason, Dick Dale, Michael Nader, John Findlater, Duane King, Aron Kincaid. Middle row: Meredith MacRae, Pam (Csiki) Freeman, Anita Mann, Roger Christian. Bottom row: Deborah Walley, Salli Sachse, Susan Hart, Bobbi Shaw, Mikki Jamison, Annette Funicello.

**BELOW: The 1992 Beach Party Reunion.** Top row: William Wellman, Jr., Jody McCrea, Yvonne Craig, Paul Gleason, Tommy Kirk, Ed Garner, Pam Freeman, Anita Mann. Middle row: Dwayne Hickman, Julie Parrish, Quinn O'Hara, Meredith MacRae, Diane McBain, Noreen Corcoran, Karen Jensen, Susan Hart. Bottom row: Mary Hughes, Salli Sachse, Ahna Capri, Patti Chandler, Aron Kincaid.





**LEFT:** Aron Kincaid played Russ Colombo opposite Jill Clayburgh (as Carole Lombard) in *GABLE AND LOMBARD* (1976). **RIGHT:** Aron was one of Lesley Ann Warren's suitors in Disney's *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE* (1967).

cially if you have peace of mind about it." And he said, "I definitely do," and I believed him; I feel that he's happy, now.

**SS:** Speaking of happy, you worked at Disney in *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE*, with Fred MacMurray.

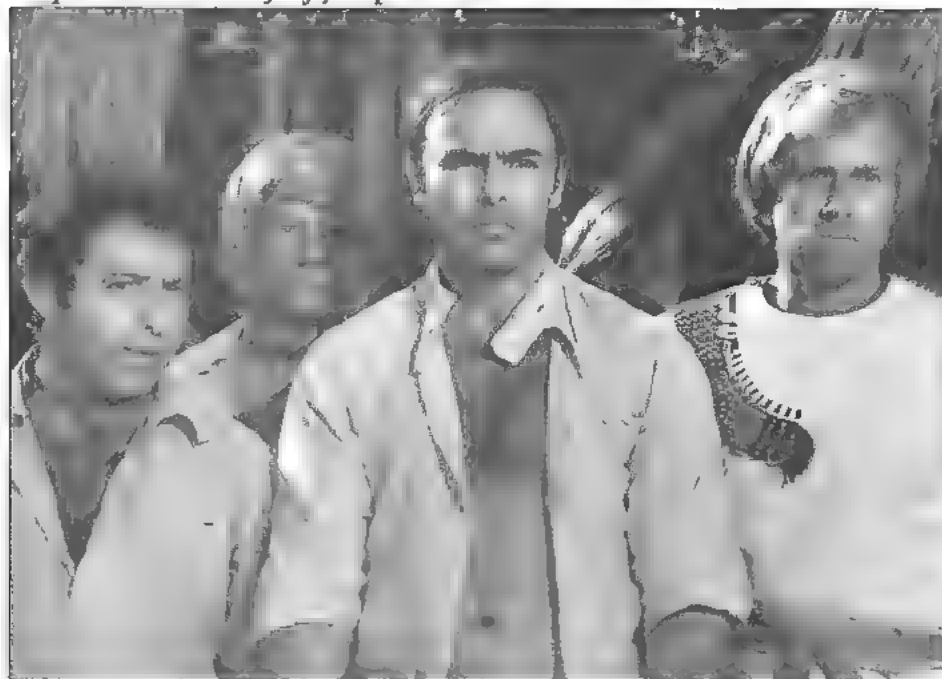
**AK:** That was actually the fourth time I'd worked with him, yet it was the first time that I met him! (Laughs) On *MY THREE SONS*, they'd shoot

his parts at the beginning of the season, and then we'd just talk to a wall. (Laughs) On *THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE*, we didn't have any scenes together. Mine were with Lesley Ann Warren and John Davidson. Lesley Ann Warren was overworked and—I guess it was pneumonia or something—anyway, she was hospitalized. I was kept on salary through her entire convalescence; I

was sending flowers to the hospital saying, "Please stay sick. I'm making more money than I ever have!" (Laughs) Not too gentlemanly, but honest. That was the nicest experience I've had working in films. Although I didn't have a very big part, they gave me glorious billing. You'd think I was one of the leads when you see the

*Continued on page 107*

Gene Roddenberry touched base on *PLANET EARTH* for his 1975 television retread of his 1973 *GENESIS II*. John Saxon (Center) starred with Aron Kincaid. **RIGHT:** Aron is especially proud of his work in *THE SECRET SHARER*, adapted from the story by Joseph Conrad.





# CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION

## ANOTHER "WORST MOVIE EVER MADE"?

### BY ARON KINCAID

Not everyone out there thinks Edward D. Wood's notorious *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* is the worst film ever made. Here's an article written by Aron Kincaid for *Movie Collector's World* (and reprinted by their permission), responding to a scathing letter in the July 1, 1983, edition of that estimable publication, in which a caustic writer cast his vote for *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION*. The worst movie ever made? *Scarlet Street* interviewee Aron agrees wholeheartedly, and he should know—he was the star!

The July 1, 1983, issue (#163) of *Movie and Film Collector's World* carried a cover article by Mr. Lawrence Watt-Evans dealing with a film he considers to be the worst motion picture ever made: *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION* (1968). Mr. Watt-Evans should be given some sort of medal for having brought to light the existence of this all-time low in the history of cinema.

I thought that perhaps I could contribute a bit more information regarding the film, as I had the dubious honor (make that "great misfortune") to have been the "utterly bland" leading man of this bizarre piece of inconsequential trivia.

Mr. Watt-Evans was being too kind in using the word "bland" to describe my performance. "Blind" would have been a better word, as I was seven sheets to the wind on Grand Marnier in almost every printed take. I don't like liquor, but Grand Marnier was the only decent-tasting poison I could find that would dull my senses to a point at which I could forget where I was and what I was going through. *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION* was, and remains still, the professional low point of my 25-year career in television, stage, radio, and motion pictures.

In 1965 I had three films in release. There were two for Paramount: *GIRLS ON THE BEACH* and *BEACH BALL*. Both were unremarkable but harmless, and both earned a great deal of money for their small investments. (I think the total budget for each was about \$350,000.) Up-and-coming singers were squeezed into old "Let's put on a show to raise the money for the \_\_\_\_\_" (fill in sorority, pawn shop instruments, college, etc.) plots. The 60s brought a kinky quality to the ancient money-raising premise in that the fellows ended up in drag in both films.

When you're 22 and hoping to have an Oscar on your mantel by the time you're 30, you do whatever the script and the director dictate. At least I did.

My third film of that year was *SKI PARTY* for American International. I was finally out of women's clothes, but I did get "engaged" to Dwayne Hickman, who, along with Frankie Avalon, was masquerading as an English girl!

By Fall 1965, I had made the cover of *Look* magazine for the second time, was thoroughly represented in all the fan magazines, and was receiving more than 5,000 fan letters a month. When my mail outdrew that of Frankie and Annette together, the studio offered a seven-year contract. I felt I needed as many films under my belt as I could get and jumped at the offer. My first film as a contract player with American International was to have been a musical version of *THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD* with Frankie and Annette as Robin and Marian. I was to have played the part of Sir Guy DeGisbourne, which was assayed by Basil Rathbone in the Errol Flynn version. I was never told the reasons behind the shelving of the project, but one can only cringe to think of what the results might have been.

Instead I was put into *THE GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI* (1966) with Tommy Kirk, Deborah Walley, Nancy Sinatra, Boris Karloff, Patsy Kelly, Francis X. Bushman, and, of all people, Basil Rathbone! The picture was jinxed from the first day of shooting, when a grip fell from the catwalk and was killed as he broke his neck upon im-



fact with the sound-stage floor. The bloodstains remained on the giant Oriental carpet that dominated the main set of the haunted mansion.

By the time the film went into release, seven of the cast were also dead, including three actors in their early 20s. The box-office receipts followed the same pattern. It was the death knell for the beach-party films, with the exception of *DR. GOLDFOOT AND THE BIKINI MACHINE* (1966), which was the studio's second attempt to make a box-office team of Avalon and Hickman, with Vincent Price thrown in for good measure. It came and went unnoticed.

I had done a cameo in *GOLDFOOT*, so I went to the studio screening. By now I was beginning to realize that my previous contract with Universal-International was looking like MGM star treatment compared to the way AIP was putting projects together and filling them with contract players without considering whether they were even remotely right for their roles.

The first year of my contract came to an end. I felt as though I had accomplished nothing. Well, at least I had a pay hike for the second year that was beginning. Or did I? It was discovered that I had never formally signed the original seven-year contract that had been sent to my agent Jack Gilardi (Mr. Funicello). AIP wanted my signature on the contract within one week and they wanted to start my second year at the same salary negotiated for the first year. With saliva dripping from their mouths, the lawyers moved in.

It is virtually impossible to describe what a legal battle with a motion-picture studio can do to your life, your nerves, your family, and your sanity. My manager, agents, and lawyers filed suit on my behalf in Superior Court for breach of contract. The final outcome was that American International offered an out-of-court settlement. I was so relieved to see an end to the ordeal that the studio's request for two more "play or pay" films from me seemed a small concession, considering that I was becoming physically ill from this seemingly endless army of people fighting over bits of meat.

The first of the two films was to be a science-fiction remake of *SHE-CREATURE*, an AIP film first made in 1956 with Chester Morris, Marla English, and Tom Conway (George Sanders' brother). Off the cuff, it sounded as if it might be sort of fun. Little did I know what was in store when the script for *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION* arrived at my home. Within one day of shooting I was wishing that I was back with the lawsuit. It had been heaven in comparison.

The triple threat (writer/producer/director) of *CREATURE* was a gigantic ex evangelist minister by the name of Larry Buchanan. He was huge in stature and minuscule in

the areas of charm and talent. Buchanan had somehow (notice, I didn't say that he wasn't enterprising) convinced AIP heads James H. Nicholson and Samuel Z. Arkoff that he could deliver a trio of films, all remakes of AIP properties, for the price of one low budget film. That was music to the ears of Arkoff and Nicholson, who agreed to provide the leading players. The three "classics" to be filmed were *THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON* (1959) (poor Paul Petersen of *THE DONNA REED SHOW* got that one), *MARS NEEDS WOMEN* (1968, with Tommy Kirk and Yvonne "Batgirl" Craig) and . . . trumpets, please . . . *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION*.

The first two had been completed when I flew into Dallas, Texas, on a hot and humid April afternoon in 1967. Having worked with Tommy and Yvonne in 1965, I had telephoned them both before leaving Los Angeles.

They confirmed what I had feared from the beginning: I was in for 14 days that would make my three-month boot camp in the United States Coast Guard look like a Sunday-school picnic.

The limousine that picked me up at the airport took me immediately to the stretch of highway that four years before had been the scene of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. When I asked the driver why he was taking me to such a place upon my arrival, he answered that Mr. Buchanan wanted me to see Dallas before leaving that evening for location at Lake Texoma. So much for Dallas.

The crew was sloshed to the gills when we pulled into Lake Texoma's Tanglewood Country Club around midnight. It wasn't to be any different for the next two weeks. What's worse, I was to become one of them in an effort to survive.

I had just checked into my cottage when Mr. Buchanan came to the door to

welcome me. He was accompanied by the prop man, who was fussing over an object he was carrying in his arms. It looked to be a large rubber frog suit with zippers all over it. I was told that this was the creature and that, when a head was added and the body filled out with a human, it would be quite serviceable. I fell back in a fit of laughter that vaporized when Buchanan said that my hair was to be darkened to a dark brown in the morning to de-emphasize my youth. I was supposed to be a parapsychologist, and Buchanan felt that my teeny-bopper appeal should be minimized at every opportunity.

The first day of shooting, I wandered onto the set with dark green hair and a deadly hangover from Grand Marnier. The constant jet traffic from a neighboring Air Force base was ruining nine out of 10 takes. I figured that with my green hair nobody would notice a few jets. A hasty trip to the aforementioned air base yielded a captain's uniform for



Aron Kincaid

Photo courtesy of Aron Kincaid

me. I became Captain Ted Dell, a parapsychologist in the Air Force. Now the roaring jets could be left on the soundtrack, and, with a few inserts of planes hurtling across the grainy 16mm sky, everything would be hunky dory.

Buchanan also felt that I would gain a degree of maturity by having a cigarette dangling from my mouth at every opportunity. I had never smoked on film before. I never have since. In some scenes there was so much smoke that you couldn't see my lower face. Too bad it didn't cover some of the dialogue. The uniform was ill-fitting, the humidity unbearable, my green hair was turning burgundy, my bar bill was astronomical, and everything was covered with a film of tobacco smoke.

Les Tremayne (playing the evil Dr. Basso) was a delight and a gentleman. I had been aware of his talents since I was a boy and had seen him in *WAR OF THE WORLDS* (1953). His wonderful sense of humor and the stories of his early days in radio helped me through this mess immeasurably. Our leading lady was a lovely woman named Pat Delaney. The script called for her to be in various stages of hypnotic trance throughout the entire film. In a situation like this, a trance was a wonderful form of protection. Pat rarely left her rooms.

Buchanan was setting up shots 24 hours around the clock in order to bring the project in on time. Featured players were brought in from Dallas or just recruited off the road to Texoma. One night, 80 dress extras filled the main dining room where we were shooting. I couldn't believe such production values until somebody showed me an ad from the local newspaper heralding a free buffet dinner at the Country Club to anybody who showed up in fancy clothes. Once they were packed inside, Buchanan literally sealed off the exits until he had completed four or five hours of incompetent filming. Many of the freeloaders had tried to leave, but were told that they had already been "established" in the master shots and that they must stay to the bitter end. Like Joan Collins when they sealed her in the pyramid in *LAND OF THE PHAROHS* (1958), the coiffed and bejeweled ladies of Tanglewood sought escape.

Finally, around one in the morning, the sweat-soaked ensemble was told that they could go to their cars, but that they must run and scream in terror while doing so. The direction was hardly necessary, as the nearly 100 Texans ran shrieking to the parking lot in an effort to flee their first encounter with the worst kind.

Filming 30 and 40 takes was par for the course. Everything was malfunctioning. Buchanan seemed to be in a state of manic ecstasy. He totally believed that he was creating a science-fiction masterpiece. The supporting players

became grips when half the crew walked off the picture for lack of paychecks. And so it went for two weeks.

On the 14th and last day, I told Buchanan that I would be leaving the following morning on the first flight out of Dallas for home. He became outraged. Didn't I realize that we still had three days of shooting left with me? I told him to check my contract.

The next morning, on the way to the airport, Buchanan sat in the back of the battered old taxi-cab I had secured, with a Dictaphone type of tape recorder. He had me read the unfilmed portions of the script into the microphone. I couldn't imagine how he could use any of it in the picture until I saw the final results in a hotel room in San Diego three years later.

A friend of mine had seen a listing for *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION* in a San Diego TV log. Although the very thought of the movie sent the hair standing up on my arms, I trekked down the coast on the scheduled day, rented a room with a color television set, and waited while the clock ticked slowly toward the inevitable. What I saw left me numb. The movie was even worse than I had thought possible!

Buchanan had squeezed his 6'5" bulk into my size 40-medium uniform and finished the film by playing my part in long shots, with the muffled voice-over from our taxi-cab recording session. The zippers on the rubber monster glittered in the moonlight as it stalked victims, the entire cast sounded like a junior-high drama class on drugs, and I stumbled around looking smoky, green, and drunk.

Leonard Maltin, in his wonderful *TV Movies*, gives *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION* the much-deserved 'Bomb' rating and calls it "excruciating, with hilariously illogical musical interludes." I call it the same thing

Mr. Watt-Evans calls it: quite simply, without precedent or exception, *CREATURE OF DESTRUCTION* has the worst acting, the worst direction, the worst production values, the worst soundtrack and scoring of any motion picture ever made on this planet.

Despite the fact that Mr. Watt-Evans thinks that he saw the only screening, I can assure him that the damned thing seems to play here in Los Angeles every three months without fail. I've been told on several occasions about groups of kids watching video tapes of it while they chant the dialogue along with the "performances"!

About two years ago I bought a print of *CREATURE* from an ad in *Film Collector's World*, just to make sure that there would be one less print in the world. The seller was wonderful. When I told him I wanted to buy it, he said, "Are you sure? Have you . . . uh . . . ever seen it?"



Creature of Destruction





Ohhh, Frankiel

You've read the book. You've seen the movies. You've even read the comic books. But you haven't really seen Frankenstein until you've read *Frank* by Harvey Comics.

Yes, this is the same Harvey Comics that still publishes *Casper* and *Little Lulu*. However, as Disney has Touchstone, Harvey has Nemesis to publish its adult releases.

*Frank* is touted as a "modern version of the story as it might happen today." Issue #1 opens with our Karloff-look-alike hero rescuing a hapless woman from gang violence (gang rape, to be specific). The woman follows the monster to his home in an abandoned building in the city.

*Frank* could be an interesting modern interpretation of the modern Prometheus. The art and writing are clearly superior. However, the story seems destined to join the ranks of ordinary superhero-style comics.

With any luck, Harvey will abandon the "hero" mentality and encourage experienced writer D. G. Chichester to explore the macabre passion and despair of the original Frankenstein Monster. Certainly, the cinema interpretation of Karloff is preferable to Frankenstein tackling urban social problems. Comics already feature enough guns and violence. *Frank* could be a trend-setter for Harvey's Nemesis line if they are willing to do a true "modern interpretation" of this timeless tale.

### Vamp unto My Feet

Speaking of horror revivals, Vampirella has again risen from the tomb. The new Vampirella series features all-color adventures of the world's most alluring vampire.

Fans lucky enough to remember *Famous Monsters* editor Forry Acker-

man's original sultry vampire from the Warren Group in the 1960s and 1970s will be pleased to note that Vampirella's sexy look is as titillating as ever. Harris Comics has enlisted the talents of artist Dave Stevens (of *Rocketeer* fame) to update the barely-dressed look of Vampirella.

"People who read the character now are going to get a newer twist on the character, more hard-edged," reveals writer Tom Sniegoski. "She's somebody who's a really strong female character for the 90s." (Reality Check: Vampi is still cheesecake.)

Vampirella will battle the forces of evil in a world "infested with the supernatural," says Sniegoski. She is still hostage to her own reliance on red stuff, but her history has been slightly—well—revamped. In fact, we find that Vampi is *not* from a planet of vampires where the rivers flow blood.

Harris will not reveal the secret of Vampi's vampirism, but promises that it will not disappoint her devoted fans. "It's got a supernatural/religious overtone to it," observes Sniegoski. Harris also has collected many of the original black-and-white Vampirella stories in graphic novels.

### For the Birds

Ordinarily, reference to Robert E. Howard does not conjure tales of terror and suspense. Fans of sword and sorcery know him better for creating Conan, King Kull, and Solomon Kane.

Yet, like those of many of his contemporaries, Howard's short stories sometimes deviated from the (for him) predictable. Posthumously published, "Pigeons from Hell" was one of the author's rare stabs at the horror genre. It's no surprise that Howard's tale of axe-wielding zombies has a stylistically striking resemblance to the work of his friend H. P. Lovecraft. Make no mistake, Howard's story is every bit as scary as Lovecraft's.

Writer/artist Scott Hampton's comic-book adaptation of this intense tale is a riveting tribute to Howard's horror-writing abilities. In *Pigeons from Hell*, Hampton's paintings are vibrant and shocking, reaffirming that comics are not just for kids anymore.

### Bat to the Future

Collected graphic novels are a god-send for comic fans more interested in reading than in collecting as an investment. DC Comics has always offered a wide range of works at a reasonable price.

*Batman: Knightfall*, Parts One and Two reprint the compelling story line that featured the grotesquely violent

"demise" of Batman. The Caped Crusader's back is literally snapped over the knee of Bane, a vicious, drug-crazed madman.

News of Batman's paralysis spread nationwide. American comic collectors were gripped with the same hysteria caused by the *Death of Superman* story line. Sales of *Knightfall* went through the roof, which created a scarcity of the original issues.

Part One is the compelling story of Batman's unrelenting war on crime. His passion and compassion make him a classic tragic hero. When Bane snaps his spine, Batman also breaks symbolically under the weight of Gotham City, a pitiful urban cesspool dependent on his courage and strength.

Part Two of *Knightfall* concerns the rise of Azrael, Batman's high-tech successor. Azrael is a warrior who operates with a violence matching the most despicable villains. Azrael also seems to be a hero with an Achilles' heel—he's more interested in meting out justice with his fists than following the Dark Knight's traditional code of honor.

We don't want to give away too much, because the actual story is a knockout. In fact, *Knightfall* is far superior to *The Death of Superman*, which seemed contrived only for the climax.

—Buddy Scatera



Art by Dave Stevens © 1993 Harris Publications

# Bending the Willow

## On location for the filming of Granada's

# *The Three Gables*

### by David Stuart Davies

The Granada Sherlock Holmes series is back in business, but it was touch and go. At one point it looked very much as though there would be no more films featuring Jeremy Brett as Holmes and Edward Hardwicke as Watson.

In the early spring of 1993, producer June Wyndham Davies was perusing stories with a view to filming a two-hour Christmas special and a further feature-length episode. In this instance, she was considering pastiches, because those cases of Conan Doyle's left unfilmed lacked the content and elasticity to be stretched to two hours. Then two things happened: The adverse criticism that *THE LAST VAMPIRE* and *THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR* received upset Jeremy Brett so much that he vowed in future to do only the original stories and that the programs must, within reason, closely follow the original plots. At the same time, the central scheduling agency, which allocates time slots on the independent television network in Britain, dropped a little bombshell—they did not require any more two-hour Holmes films. What they would consider were one-hour episodes, but, at that time, they were prepared to offer time slots for only three. As any viewer could have told them, three films do not a series make. But they were adamant.

June Wyndham Davies had to grasp the nettle and commission half a dozen scripts (one of which, at least, was already on the Granada shelves) and book the leading actors for a series of six films, hoping that the schedulers would eventually accommodate them. In time, they did, but it was, as I said at the start, touch and bloody go.

The problems did not stop there. Because of the changes and delays, the series was late starting, and Edward Hardwicke was by then filming *SHADOWLANDS* with Anthony Hopkins. The dates overlapped on the first shooting, but the schedule could not wait—so the first script, *THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ*, had to be hastily rewritten, with the role of Watson transmuted into that of Mycroft Holmes (Charles Gray). Not an auspicious start.

However, the new series, called *THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, is all but finished now and will be shown in Britain in the spring of 1994.

I caught up with the production crew during the shooting of the third episode: *THE THREE GABLES*. It was a glorious day in September when I motored out to Lyme

Park near Manchester. It is a beautiful stretch of undulating park land, at the heart of which is Lyme Hall—a sprawling building, the main section constructed in the 18th century, featuring 18th- and 19th-century interiors: an ideal backdrop for a Sherlockian adventure. It is always strange and paradoxical to see these graceful buildings running wild with electrical cables, lights, control vans, and similar accoutrements of a modern television production team along with actors in elegant Victorian garb mixing with the track-suited, trained crew in garish anoraks. It is a surreal vision of ancient and modern.

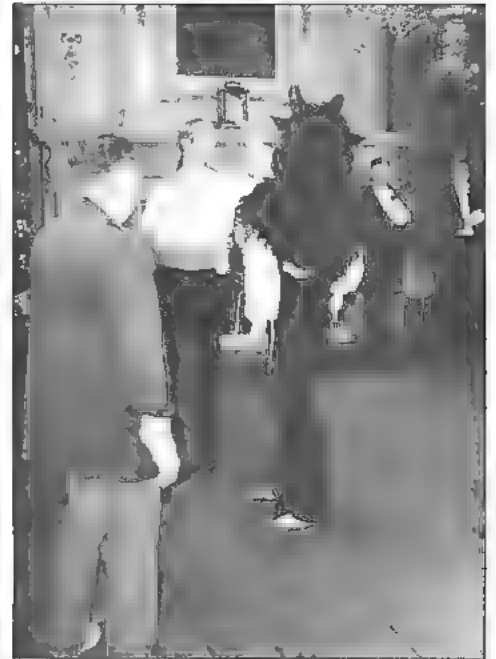
The script of *THE THREE GABLES* was written by Granada stalwart Jeremy Paul. He has been careful not to pad or invent too much, but merely to expand on what is already in the original story, whether it be alluded to directly or indirectly. Paul has built up the part of Isadora Klein (French actress Claudine Aubert) to make her a suitable nemesis for Holmes. The climactic scene in which they cross verbal swords—and more—could lead one to believe that Irene Adler



The denizens of 221B Baker Street (Rosalie Williams, Jeremy Brett, and Edward Hardwicke) surround Mary Ellis in *THE THREE GABLES*.

was not the only brilliant woman to challenge the Great Detective. The theme of morality and immorality among the monied classes is explored effectively, Paul enhancing Conan Doyle's own feelings as presented in several of his stories in the Canon. It is no wonder, then, as we are dealing with pampered lords and ladies, that Peter Hammond is at the directorial helm. Not only has he a talent for representing this lush, glamorous, and ambivalent world, but he also has a penchant for portraying it by means of reflection by mirrors, windows, polished surfaces, shiny britches—you name it. (Check this out: Look at *THE SIGN*





**LEFT:** Isadora Klein (played in the Granada production by Claudine Aubert) is one of the few (possibly the only) villainess in the Canon. Here, we meets her future lover, the considerably younger Duke of Lomond (Benjamin Pullen). **RIGHT:** The Duke plays the beast in a mock bullfight, as director Peter Hammond stands in the foreground.

OF FOUR and THE MASTER BLACKMAILER.) The good thing about the script is that it gives plenty of screen time to Holmes and Watson together.

I witnessed the filming of the opening scene: a ball at the fashionable town house of Isadora Klein. (The ball does not take place in the original story.) Two men—one the Duke of Lomond (Benjamin Pullen), wearing the mask of a bull, and the other Douglas Maberly (Gary Cady), Isadora's current lover—enact a mock bullfight. The crowd is pleasantly entertained, but for Isadora there is a *frisson* of sexual pleasure in watching two men fight for her. Indeed, when Lomond takes off the bull's mask and reveals his handsome features,

Isadora is immediately captivated and transfers her passions to him. It was a complicated and exciting scene, requiring much dextrous handling by Peter Hammond and the assistant director, Ian Galley. There were the principals, including Peter Wyngarde as Langdale Pike, to deal with; there were dancers and extras to arrange, group, and direct; there were the lights and shadows to observe; and there were mirrors to polish!

Toward the end of the shooting, a large, benevolent figure, dressed in cream canvas trousers and a black sweater, appeared behind the cameras: Jeremy Brett in mufti. He greeted many of the crew members by name and had a brief

**LEFT:** Setting up a shot of Claudine Aubert and Benjamin Pullen for THE THREE GABLES, one of six new Sherlock Holmes episodes. **RIGHT:** Douglas Maberly (Gary Cady) fights the man who will take his place in Isadora's bed.



chat with them. He shook my hand and agreed to chat after lunch in his caravan.

When I arrived, Jeremy Brett was still in his own clothes, but now his face was chalk-white with makeup. At the beginning, our conversation had the air of a confessional: "I know I told you that I thought the two-hour format might be better, but of course it's not. The ideal format for these stories is one hour. I was wrong." Apart from the criticism of *VAMPYRE* and *BACHELOR*, what, I wondered, had brought about this *volte-face*? "The tricky thing, technically, as an actor, is, if you're playing a man without a heart, it is very hard to sustain it realistically for two hours. People want to get underneath the shell, and this has led, on one or two occasions, to the loss of the mystique of Holmes. For example, for you to hear about Holmes having a love affair with a girl—"I'm engaged to be married"—is one thing, but to actually see it is something else; it exposes too much of the character. You see, I don't mind bending the willow, but I don't want it to ever break. In the one-hours, you have a chance to see him at his most brilliant without peeping too far behind the scenes."

I asked if he felt, then, that the last two efforts had strayed too far from the original. Brett's eyes widened into a mirthful stare and his head gently nodded acquiescence. "THE SUSSEX VAMPYRE is a terribly weak story to begin with, but to extend it to two hours prompted Jeremy Paul to introduce a new character, which confused people. It was a vampire story without a vampire, which proves to be terribly disappointing. There were some good things about *THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR* that worked, but there were some things, some excesses, that I didn't like." Such as? "I hated the falling in the puddle and all that rot. Not when I did it, but in retrospect. Watching it later, I looked at the scene and said, 'What is Holmes doing in the street in a nightie?' I thought, 'I don't believe this.' My belief in Holmes as a character was corrupted."

It is heartening, and at the same time disappointing, to hear this. Many of us, watching our hero scrabbling around in the mud and filth of Baker Street, clad in only a calico nightshirt, were fully aware that this was not the Sherlock Holmes we knew and loved, and wondered why Jeremy Brett couldn't see that. It is easy to retort to such a confession "I could have told you so." However, we mere mortals view the series from a comfortable distance. Brett is an actor of great intelligence and sensitivity, but these qualities come under strain when faced with a punishing filming schedule, an array of scripts from different writers, and a need to satisfy a range of directors, each with their own vision of the story and character. It is the danger of being too close.

It is difficult for us to understand the actor's role in all this. One must not forget that Brett has a job of work to do, however he may wish to be faithful to Conan Doyle. The lack of Doyle in the scripts perhaps speaks for itself.

Now, however, back on track with the one-hours, Brett claims to be happier than he has been for years. "The new stories are incredibly complicated and really need no padding. They've given me new challenges. In *THE RED CIRCLE*, it is suggested by Watson in the first act that perhaps Holmes is acting in the matter in the sense of 'art for art's sake' and that he is not fully committed, involved in the investigation. So I devised an incident toward the end to show this is not the case. I arranged that Black Georgiano should put his bloodied hand on Holmes' face, so that it is smeared red. It is a symbolic action to show that Holmes is very much involved. It is a very strong moment."

I got the impression that there had been more than the usual tinkering with *THE THREE GABLES* script. Brett was enthusiastic about the beginning: "I blush for Doyle with the Steve Dixie passage in the story—it's so rude—but we have a marvellous opening in the film. I'm right up against the window with Dixie trying to push me out. It's a comic moment, because Mrs. Hudson comes in, clips him round the ear, and shoos him out." However, Brett seemed a little concerned about the logistics later in the script. "Watson is looking after Mrs. Maberly and he's roughed up.... He's nearly killed. Why Holmes isn't there to protect him, I don't know. He should have been."

This prompted me to raise a question about the Holmes/Watson relationship. In the last few films, it has appeared that detective and biographer have become two isolated souls who merely tolerate each other because they share rooms. Brett was a little surprised at this assessment, but assured me that, in general, there was more interplay between the characters in the

new series, particularly in *THE THREE GABLES*: "Watson is the heart; Holmes is the head. Watson is also keen on sleuthing, or he wouldn't be there. I think he likes Holmes, but I don't think he's over the moon about Holmes."

I begged to differ on this point, and Brett grinned, calling me an old softy. However, he did add that he endeavoured to show that he cared for Watson, but not directly to his face. "I invented a moment in *GABLES*, after Watson has been roughed up, when I'm about to confront Isadora Klein. I tell Watson to wait for me. I'm about to go, and then I turn and point to his bandaged hand and say, 'It's time that hand was re-dressed,' and then I go."



Jeremy Brett now feels that he went overboard in this soggy scene from 1992's *THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR*.



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## Silent Horrors:

SHE	1911	30 Minutes
20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA	1916	
THE GOLEM	1920	118 Minutes
THE PHANTOM CHARIOT	1920	56 Minutes
THE HAUNTED CASTLE	1921	56 Minutes
NOSFERATU restored	1922	70 Minutes
THE SHOCK	1932	64 Minutes
DANTE'S INFERNO	1924	50 Minutes
SORROWS OF SATAN	1925	90 Minutes
CAT & THE CANARY	1927	99 Minutes
THE MAGICIAN	1927	75 Minutes
WEST OF ZANZIBAR	1927	50 Minutes
THE UNKNOWN	1928	55 Minutes
MYSTERIOUS ISLAND	1929	90 Minutes

## Other Horror & Sci-Fi:

DAY THE WORLD ENDED	'56	R. Denning
REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN		P. Cushing
BURN WITCH BURN	'60	B/W
THE LOST WORLD color	'60	C. Rains
TERROR OF THE TONGS	'61	C. Lee
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	'62	H. Lam
HAUNTED PALACE color	'63	V. Price
LAST MAN ON EARTH B/W	'64	V. Price
CURSE OF THE FLY	'65	B. Donlevy
MR. SARDONICUS uncut with voting		
FACE OF FU MANCHU	'65	C. Lee
ATTACK OF THE PUPPET PEOPLE		J. Agar
THE PROJECTED MAN	'67	color
VAMPIRE CIRCUS uncensored version		
CAPTAIN KRONOS, VAMPIRE HUNTER color		
TWINS OF EVIL		Collinson Sisters
HORROR HOTEL		C. Lee

## More 1950's:

ISLAND MONSTER	'57	Karloff
THE ASTOUNDING SHE-MONSTER	1957	
FIRE MAIDENS OF OUTER SPACE	1955	
SHE CREATURE	'57	M. English
THE BLACK SCORPION	'57	Denning
ALLIGATOR PEOPLE		Letterboxed version
THE WEREWOLF	'56	S. Ritch
VOODOO WOMAN	'57	M. English
THE GIANT BEHEMOTH	'56	G. Evans
ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN	'57	F. Tucker
THE UNDEAD	'57	P. Duncan
THE INVISIBLE BOY	'57	R. Eyer
BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE	'58	B. Shelly
LOST CONTINENT	'51	C. Romero

## The 1930's:

THE UNHOLY THREE	'30	Chaney
MURDER BY THE CLOCK	'31	W. Boyd
THE OLD DARK HOUSE	'32	Karloff
BEHIND THE MASK	'32	Karloff
FREAKS uncut version	'32	W. Ford
SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM	'33	Atwill
SHE restored 102 min.	'33	H. Gahan
VAMPIRE uncut	'32	
MURDERS IN THE ZOO	'33	Atwill
WHITE ZOMBIE uncut	'35	Lugosi
THE MONSTER WALKS	'32	R. Lease
NIGHT OF TERROR	'33	Lugosi
THE SPHINX	'33	Atwill
THE GHOUL orig. print	'33	Karloff
THE EVIL MIND	'33	C. Rains
MYSTERIOUS MR. WONG	'35	Lugosi
THE BLACK ROOM	'35	Karloff
MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN	'36	Karloff
THE PHANTOM SHIP	'36	Lugosi
SHADOW OF CHINATOWN	'36	Lugosi
NIGHT KEY	'37	Karloff
MAN WITH NINE LIVES	'39	Karloff
CAT & THE CANARY	'39	B. Hope

## The 1950's:

FROM HELL IT CAME	'57	Andrews
TARGET EARTH	'54	Denning
MACABRE	'58	J. Backus
CREATURE WITH THE ATOM BRAIN		
LAND UNKNOWN scope	'57	J. Mahoney
ENEMY FROM SPACE	'57	Donlevy
GALTIKI THE IMMORTAL MONSTER		
BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN color		
WORLD WITHOUT END	'56	Marlowe
QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT	'56	Donlevy
4 SKULLS OF JONATHAN DRAKE	1958	
BEAST WITH A MILLION EYES		
CAPE CANAVERAL MONSTERS	1958	
THE TINGLER	'59	V. Price
ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS	1957	
MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD		
CURSE OF THE FACELESS MAN	1958	
THE CRAWLING EYE	'57	F. Tucker
THE VAMPIRE	'57	J. Beal
THE BLACK SLEEP	'56	Rathbone
BLOOD CREATURE	'58	Lederer
20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH	1958	
COSMIC MONSTERS	'58	F. Tucker
PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE		Lugosi

## The 1940's:

BOWERY AT MIDNIGHT		
BOOGEY MAN W LL GET YOU	'42	Lugosi
BEAST WITH FIVE FINGERS		Karloff
FACE OF MARBLE	'46	Corradine
CAPTIVE WILD WOMAN	'43	L. Denning
UNKNOWN ISLAND color	'48	R. Rathbone
THE MAD DOCTOR	'40	Karloff
YOU'LL FIND OUT	'40	Karloff
BLACK FRIDAY	'40	Karloff
THE DEVIL COMMANDS	'41	Karloff
THE BLACK CAT	'41	Rathbone
MAN-MADE MONSTER	'41	L. Chaney
NIGHT MONSTER	'42	Lugosi
MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET		Atwill
THE UNDYING MONSTER	'42	J. Howard
CATMAN OF PARIS	'46	C. Esmond
HOUSE OF HORRORS	'45	R. Hatton
SPIDER WOMAN STRIKES BACK		R. Hatton
THE BRUTE MAN	'46	R. Hatton
THE FLYING SERPENT	'43	G. Zucco
INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE		J. Hall
THE MAD GHOUL	'43	G. Zucco
VOODOO MAN	'44	Lugosi
THE MAD MONSTER	'43	G. Zucco
SOUL OF A MONSTER	'43	R. Hobart
RETURN OF THE APE MAN	'44	Lugosi
STRANGE CONFESSION	'45	L. Chaney
CALLING DR. DEATH	'43	L. Chaney
WIERD WOMAN	'42	L. Chaney
DEAD MAN'S EYES	'42	L. Chaney
INNER SANCTUM	'48	C. Russell
CRY OT THE WEREWOLF	'46	N. Foch
DEAD MEN WALK	'43	G. Zucco
ISLE OF THE DEAD	'46	Karloff
THE CREEPER	'48	O. Stevens
BEHIND LOCKED DOORS	'48	T. Johnson
BEOLAM	'46	Karloff
DEVIL BAT'S DAUGHTER	'46	La Planche
KING OF THE ZOMBIES	'41	M. Moreland
PILLOW OF DEATH	'45	L. Chaney
STRANGE CASE OF DR. RX		Atwill
THE LODGER	'44	L. Cragar
MYSTERY OF MARIE ROGET		M. Montez
FROZEN GHOST	'45	L. Chaney
SOMEWHERE IN THE NIGHT		J. Hodiak
THE CAT CREEPS	'46	W. Beery Jr.
MYSTERIOUS DOCTOR	'43	J. Loder
BLUEBEARD	'44	Corradine
THE BLACK RAVEN	'43	G. Zucco
THE APE	'40	Karloff
JUNGLE CAPTIVE	'44	Corradine

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Horror is alive and howling on TV with Count Cool Rider, befanged host of SATURDAY FRIGHT AT THE MOVIES (LEFT); Dr. Speculo, bespectacled host of TALES FROM 6 FEET UNDER (CENTER); and Ghoull Dad, bemused host of CINEMA DEMENTIA (RIGHT). Who says the Fab Fifties are dead? Where are the poodle skirts? The hula hoops?

For anyone who misses the grand old tradition from television horror's heyday in the 1950s—that is, a “live” ghoull-in-residence at your local station imbuing “Killer B” creakers with some well-deserved kidding, the news tonight is good: The creatures still walk among us! Yes, in new incarnations, a fresh brood of horror hosts has arisen to rekindle the torch—in the form of Vampiria, Zacherley, Ghoullardi, and Dr. Lucifer, to name just a few—that once warmed a generation of monster-happy baby boomers. An in-depth coverage of all of TV's creeps might prove prohibitive, but *Scarlet Street* has unearthed a high-profile Trio of Terror now making “B-minus” horror films more palatable around the country.

If you have plans to travel this year and happen to be in the Las Vegas area, turn on a television set on Saturday night at 10 P.M. There, on KFBT-TV Channel 33, you can sink your fangs into SATURDAY FRIGHT AT THE MOVIES, hosted by Count Cool Rider, a perfect fusion of Count Dracula and Elvis. A vicious visage in black, the Count sports fangs, a day's growth of beard, a lightning-bolt-embroidered cape, boots, hairy (exposed) chest, and blood-red lips, the total effect making you feel that he might coldcock you before draining your blood. Cool Rider, who keeps his real name under mummy wraps, looks about 30, but gives his age as 427. His film fare tends to run to the AIP Poe films, such as *HOUSE OF USHER* (1960), *TALES OF TERROR* (1962), and *THE RAVEN* (1963). An actor who spent six years performing in Florida, Rider assumed hosting duties on Channel 33 almost three years ago when he was asked to replace a character named “Charmeuse Le Trek”.

Cool Rider loves horror movies, yet he is also a ravenous Elvis fan, a not-so-surprising fact given his name and cos-

tume. He makes it clear, however, that he never mocks the King, and that fans send him letters telling him they like the way he handles it. He even drives a customized Lincoln Continental sporting a bat-shaped hood ornament, remote-activated wings that snap out from under the doors, and flames that shoot out from the tailpipes. One of Mr. Rider's ambitions for a future show was to have had Vincent Price as a guest, a dream unfortunately destined to remain a dream since the actor's recent death. Between shows, the Count languishes in his lair with a copy of his fave monster mag—you guessed it, *Scarlet Street*—clutched between his webbed fingers. It is reported that he has flipped for us in a big way! So be sure not to pass through the City of Lights without checking out Count Cool Rider on Saturday night.

To the East, in Chicago, can be found another dark invasion of the local airwaves. CINEMA DEMENTIA reigns here on Chicago Access Channel 19. Its host, Ghoull Dad, is a goateed, moustachioed bestial beatnik with a penchant for vintage 50s and 60s stuff, such as *ATTACK OF THE GIANT LEECHES* (1959), *THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON* (1959), *THE BRAINIAC* (1961), and *THE ASTOUNDING SHE-MONSTER* (1958). Ghoull Dad, in his spare time known by the very unthreatening moniker of Chip Hess, sometimes inserts himself into his films in a unique way—you might see him walk across the screen or, as in *LEECHES*, reclining in a beach chair in the monsters' cave while their victims scream for their lives. This is one horror host who has a handle on stress. With his shades and throwaway remarks, viewers are eased into an education about all things Psychotronic. Cool but straightforward with his audience, Ghoull Dad tells it like it is—for example, inviting his guests back for *SPIDER BABY* (1964) with the inducement, “This was one of Lon

# Menace, Anyone?

## TV's New Horror Hosts

### by Richard Scrivani





**ABOVE:** In his Dr. Speculo persona, Ben Armstrong meets the coolest and ghouldest of all television horror hosts: Zacherley! **BELOW RIGHT:** Chip Hess as the ultra-hip Ghou! Dad.

Chaney's last good performances, even though he was crooked during most of the filming." Channel 19's publicity for CINEMA DEMENTIA features what looks like the mummified remains of Ghou! Dad (with shades), with copy reading "Wild, Gone and Craazy, Man!"

If you have spotted a trend here, go to the head of the crypt. Horror hosting seems to be leaning distinctly toward 50s "hipness": leather, bikers, beatniks, etc. The reason for this may be the obvious, that so many of the bargain-basement horror titles run on the midnight circuit are 50s vintage, but the inclination may also have roots in the original crop of chiller MCs—the ones who dotted the country, the spawn of Vampira and Zacherley: Pittsburgh's Chilly Billy, Fort Worth's Gorgon, San Francisco's Terrence, Baltimore's Dr. Lucifer, Milwaukee's Dr. Cadaverino, and Portland, Oregon's Miss Tarantula Ghoul.

CINEMA DEMENTIA has an extra ingredient in its potion, supplementing the usual film offerings with trailers and shorts, the latter locally produced. One called LE BEATNIK SOPHISTIQUE invites us to find out "Why Beatniks Were Way Cooler than Hippies". Yes, on your way through Chicago, visit a friend's pad, make some espresso, chill out, and pay Ghou! Dad a visit.

If you're winding your way southward, you might be lucky enough to catch the absolute looniest of our Unholy Three—a frazzled and downright cartoonlike presence called Dr. Ignatius Speculo. Broadcasting from WCTV Channel 6 in Tallahassee, Florida, Dr. Speculo presides over a demented funhouse-type dungeon in a program called TALES FROM 6 FEET UNDER. "A Skull that Talks! A Bat that Mocks! And the Twisted Doctor Who Serves the Shocks!" screams the promo art for the show, which airs every Saturday night at 11:35 P.M. With his dark-rimmed "goggle glasses", fly-away hair, and Joker-sized mouth you could park a Buick in, he resembles a combination of Bernard Jukes's stage Renfield and Conrad Veidt in THE MAN WHO LAUGHS (1927). Speculo is the alias of 30-

year-old Ben Armstrong (!), who, when in character, speaks in a squeaky Peter Lorre voice that always seems to change during the course of the show. He performs crazy experiments, aided by Mortimer, the Talking Skull; Rufus, the Bat; and Frunobulax, the Monster. (Frunobulax resides inside the doctor's wall and eats what's left of any "guests".) Also on hand, via video commercial parodies written by Armstrong and Bill and Susan Fogarty, is Max, the Dead Guy, the corpse with a thousand uses, played by Cord Grote.

Dr. Speculo is an admitted fan of Zacherley, whose influence is hard to miss. When in one of the films a jungle explorer gets conked by a coconut, Speculo is shown perched in a palm tree throwing them. When the ground is littered with corpses, could one of them be...? Some of the stuff in the good doctor's vaults includes PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE (1959), DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS (1954), and ATOM AGE VAMPIRE (1961). Armstrong has always loved horror movies, unlike Zach, who was never allowed to watch them when he was a kid. Speculo's schooling makes him over-qualified for his job: a B.A. in Medieval Metaphysics, an M.A. in Non-Euclidean Geometry, and a Ph.D. in Pre-Colombian Neuro-Surgery (from a home-study course!)—and, in his spare time, door-to-door sales of a line of floral fragrances for the kitchen and bathroom.

Alter-ego Armstrong is no slacker, either. In addition to his on-air chores, he produces shows and commercials, is a lighting director, and directs the news on weekends. As if all that isn't enough, he found the time last May to show up at the *Famous Monsters* convention in Arlington, Virginia! It's a shame that you can only catch him if you live in the Tallahassee area, but it might be wise to make the rounds of your own local or cable access stations. Who knows? You may have a resident madman of your own doing his thing late at night.

It's reassuring to those of us who cut our teeth on this stuff that horror hosting is not simply a thing of the past. In fact, it's downright satisfying to see those ghosts of the past reappearing in these very welcome newcomers—whatever they are!



# Book Ends

## The Scarlet Street Review of Books

### SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GREAT DETECTIVE IN PAPERBACK

Gary Lovisi

Gryphon Books, 1990

152 pages—\$9.95 (paperback)

In just over a century of appearing in print, Sherlock Holmes has grown far beyond Arthur Conan Doyle's original stories, appearing in so many adventures that the character now has his own impressive library. In making the effort to catalogue all the known paperback editions of both Conan Doyle's reprints and the numerous pastiches, Gary Lovisi has written a comprehensive book that should delight Holmes fans. *Sherlock Holmes: The Great Detective in Paperback*, is a no-nonsense, straightforward volume that succeeds nicely in presenting detailed information about all the Holmes books that are either in or out of print. Himself an avid collector of Holmes paperbacks, Lovisi's love for his subject shines through on every page, making this enjoyable and fascinating reading even if one doesn't own a single Holmes volume.

For the serious fan, this is a vital source of information. Listing the novels alphabetically by title, Lovisi gives the author's name, publisher's name, the first printing date (as well as the second and third, if any), and even capsule reviews regarding the book's merits in terms of production values and—in the case of the pastiches—the quality of the book as a Sherlock Holmes story.

Printed in black and white, *The Great Detective in Paperback* has a few forgivable typos. But this only adds to the charm, as Lovisi instills the reader with his love for the immortal Sherlock Holmes stories. I am already looking forward to the revised edition.

—Sean Farrell

### THE LAVENDER SCREEN: THE GAY & LESBIAN FILMS

Boze Hadleigh

Carol Publishing Group

256 pages—\$17.95

The late, great Lionel Barrymore once said that, in Hollywood, half the people are trying to be discovered

and the other half are afraid they will be!

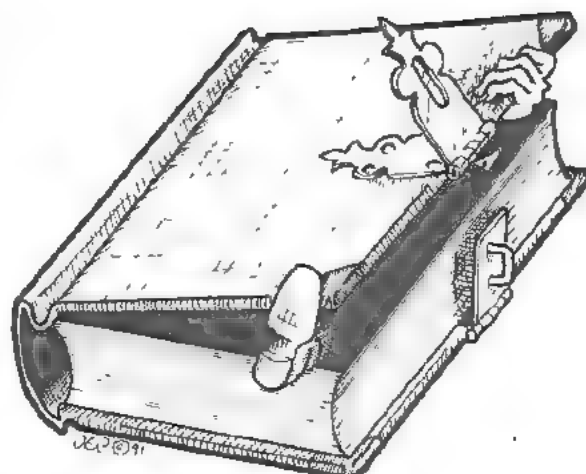
Just as Tinseltown tried (and tries) to keep its gay stars invisible, so until 1959 it tried to keep gay and lesbian characters invisible, by keeping them off the silver screen. The censorship code, empowered in 1934, forbade depictions of sexually unorthodox characters—and even mention of them.

That all changed in 1959, when Hollywood, by way of a screen version of a Tennessee Williams play, dared to present a movie with a gay character. The movie—a major hit—was *SUDDENLY, LAST SUMMER*, and the character was Sebastian, the poet-son of Mrs. Venable (Katharine Hepburn).

From that point on, there was no holding back the male or female characters who had previously not dared speak their names. This is the topic of a 1993 book, which has recently gone back to press, *The Lavender Screen*. It is the first book in over a decade to examine the gay/lesbian/bisexual aspects of the silver screen, and it is loaded with photos—some 300—and discusses over 100 movies, virtually all of them famous or cult films bound to intrigue readers of every age and sexual background.

Although *The Lavender Screen* includes prewar German films such as the lesbian classic *MAEDCHEN IN UNIFORM* (1931), its focus is on Hollywood (and such British and European pictures as 1961's *VICTIM* and 1987's *MAURICE*, or 1978's *LA CAGE AUX FOLLES* and 1977's *A SPECIAL DAY* starring Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni, but not as lovers!). The book traces the changes in depictions of nonheterosexual characters, and how the stereotypes gradually became humanized. For example, *SUDDENLY, LAST SUMMER* didn't give Sebastian any lines; because he was "deviant", he wasn't thought fit to be heard or seen (the audience glimpses his hand or shoe or his white-suited back in the distance).

Early lesbian characters were similarly handled. Barbara Stanwyck was a whorehouse madam, a raging butch stereotype, in love with call-girl



Capucine in *WALK ON THE WILD SIDE* (1962). In *THE CHILDREN'S HOUR* (1962), Shirley MacLaine has a crush on Audrey Hepburn and, after admitting it, feels so guilty that she hangs herself. In *THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE* (1968), a butch actress (Beryl Reid) has her childish blonde girlfriend (Susannah York) stolen by a predatory BBC executive (played by Coral Browne, the late Mrs. Vincent Price).

As *The Lavender Screen* shows, ump-teen top stars have jumped at the chance to play gay characters (and nowadays are often rewarded with acting award nominations—Tony, Emmy, or Oscar, like William Hurt in *KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN*). Elizabeth Taylor got into bed with Susannah York in the British film *X, Y & ZEE* (1972) to get back at hubby Michael Caine, whose mistress Ms. York was. Liz's real life husband Richard Burton played half of a gay couple with Rex Harrison in *STAIRCASE* (1969), directed by Stanley (SINGIN' IN THE RAIN) Donen.

Hadleigh's book is thoroughly researched and wittily captioned, but it never becomes strident or scholarly. It fondly revisits movies that we've all seen, and gives us new insights and information about them. It offers snippets of critical commentary by pro-gay and homophobic critics. And it indulges in sizzling gossip about the stars of these films. One intriguing fact: most gay stars, such as Rock Hudson, deliberately avoided playing gay; even today, casting directors prefer to cast heterosexual actors in gay roles so that, in interviews, they can say what a "stretch" it was for them, and how their wives or girlfriends backed them all the way! Hollywood be thy name.

—George F. Lyndon

### THE CANARY TRAINER

Nicholas Meyer

W. W. Norton & Company

225 pages—\$21.00

### THE SEVEN-PER-CENT SOLUTION

Nicholas Meyer

W. W. Norton & Company

224 pages—\$9.95

Another Great Hiatus has come to an end: Nicholas Meyer, the first writer to prove, with 1974's *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, that Holmesian pastiche might result in a money-making stay on the *New York Times* best-seller list, has returned to the form (if not entirely to form) with *The Canary Trainer*, his first Sherlock Holmes adventure since *The West End Horror* back in 1976.

In honor of the occasion, W. W. Norton has reissued *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* in an attractive softcover edition. Anyone who hasn't read it is herewith advised to pick up a copy along with *The Canary Trainer*, since the events of the new book follow hard on the heels of those in the first.

Meyer raised quite a fuss with his initial entry in the field. The shock-

ingly revisionist *Solution*, which posited that the events at Reichenbach never occurred, that Professor Moriarty was merely the Great Detective's childhood tutor, and that the whole of "The Final Problem" was concocted to cover Holmes' treatment, by Sigmund Freud, for drug addiction, was a tad more than many True Believers cared to swallow. (Odd, really, considering the irregular games played by said devotees, in which Watsonian wives are added or subtracted at whim. Billys are multiplied, and Hudsons either acquire or are denied the first name Martha.)

*The West End Horror* caused less of a stir, being basically a mystery with such notable "guest stars" as Bernard Shaw, Ellen Terry, Gilbert and Sullivan, Henry Irving, Bram Stoker, and Oscar Wilde. The result: a vastly more enjoyable book for those who like their profs Napoleonic, but no runaway hit like *Solution*, and (unlike *Solution*) no film version.

Now comes *The Canary Trainer*—not the notorious canary trainer of *Unrecorded Cases* fame, but the subject of a punning title referring to the unorthodox teacher of beautiful opera

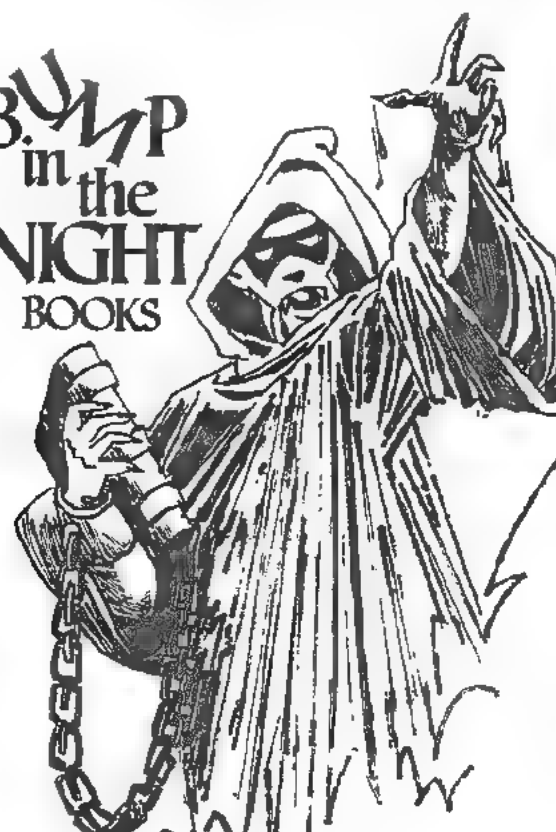
singer Christine Daae: *The Phantom of the Opera*!

One can't help but feel that Meyer has chosen to jump on the Andrew Lloyd Webber bandwagon. (Fair's fair: If Meyer procures his characters from those who came first, Maestro Webber does much the same with his melodies.) The world is currently rife with *Opera Ghosts*: a second musical version hovers on the misty outskirts of Broadway and the West End, *Phantoms* of both the Opera and the Mall haunt our movie screens and video stores, and even a second Holmes/Phantom encounter (Sam Siciliano's *The Angel of the Opera*) waits, fittingly, in the wings.

Unlike Lloyd Webber, Meyer gives credit where credit is due: to Gaston Leroux, whose 1911 thriller *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* started, if not the ball rolling, then the chandelier falling. Meyer makes Leroux a character in his own work, assigning him the role of the Paris Opera's conductor, an exacting disciplinarian who hires a certain violinist to fill a suddenly vacant spot in the orchestra pit.

The violinist is, of course, Sherlock Holmes, traveling the world while

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the world thinks him dead. Only Watson, Mycroft Holmes, and the Freuds know that the sleuth still lives, but it isn't long before a woman—the woman—learns the truth, too. Holmes barely raises a bow before it is announced that the Opera has welcomed a guest artist: Irene Adler!

It is one of Meyer's more pleasurable conceits that *The Canary Trainer* reunites Holmes and the widowed Irene. Unfortunately, he can't resist the temptation to make the Great Detective's interest in Irene take a decidedly non-intellectual turn. (Happily, he doesn't push the notion nearly as far as some other novelists and scriptwriters. No bouncing baby Sherlocks need apply, thank you very much.)

Still, it's good to have the woman on hand, especially since the doctor—Watson, by name—is absent from all but the novel's introduction and conclusion. This is Meyer's diciest gamble, and one risks a charge of heresy by claiming that he pulls it off rather better than that Conan Doyle chap did in "The Blanched Soldier" and "The Lion's Mane". It is an advantage that Holmes, rather than commit his tale to paper, relates it directly to Watson, since Meyer can then adopt the conversational tones of Holmes' voice in (for example) "The Musgrave Ritual" and skip the leaden dullness of his narrator's literary posturings.

The Phantom, too, is mostly an off-stage presence, but Meyer gives the devil his due in the thrilling closing chapters. As for the canary herself and her lover, Raoul, it is heresy on a smaller, wickedly amusing scale that the author sees them for what they have always been: young, callow, and intellectually wanting. (Actually, to call Christine "intellectually wanting" is generous; she's really too stupid to know she needs anything.)

Meyer is saddled with a story whose outcome is known to practically all, but he manages to make it fresh. If *The Canary Trainer* is neither as audacious as *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* nor as mysterious as *The West End Horror*, it's still fun to have Meyer once more "fueling" the Canon. Purists, duck!

—Richard Valley

#### THE FUGITIVE RECAPTURED

Ed Robertson

Pomegranate Press, Ltd., 1993

208 pages—\$17.95

The 1960s produced many classic television shows, among which are the original STAR TREK, THE TWI-

LIGHT ZONE, and THE FUGITIVE. The first two series have had volumes written about them. Now, author Ed Robertson offers a comprehensive and compelling look at THE FUGITIVE. If the success of the recent Harrison Ford remake is any indication, THE FUGITIVE is just as popular now as it was when it first aired some 30 years ago. In his exhaustively researched book, Ed Robertson not only offers criticism on each and every episode, but also gives fascinating details on the "behind the scenes" story of each show, as well as the series in general. His book goes to great length in examining the trials of series creator Roy Huggins in his initial attempt to get THE FUGITIVE off the ground. The idea of a TV show centered around a man running from the law—even though he was completely innocent—was a repulsive concept to the narrow-minded TV executives Huggins encountered.

It took the efforts of legendary TV producer Quinn Martin (the original UNTOUCHABLES, THE F.B.I.) to finally get THE FUGITIVE off and running. Within four seasons, Roy Huggins' "repulsive concept" became a worldwide success. Robertson clearly knows and loves his subject. His book is filled with interviews of just about everyone who worked on the show, cast and crew alike. Actor Barry Morse, who played THE FUGITIVE'S tireless pursuer, Lt. Gerard, is interviewed extensively, and comments about the series are given by fan Stephen King, who also wrote the introduction. Another nice touch Robertson adds is reprinting a 1964 *Mad* magazine parody titled "The Phewgitive", which is quite funny. Dedicated to its late star, David Janssen, *The Fugitive Recaptured* is on the same superior level as *The Twilight Zone Companion*, giving readers an entertaining, fact filled look at the inner workings of a show still vastly popular.

—Sean Farrell

#### LON CHANEY: THE MAN BEHIND THE THOUSAND FACES

by Michael Blake

The Vestal Press, 1993

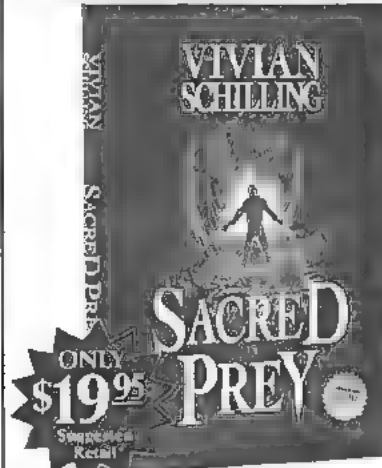
392 pages—no price listed

Michael Blake's new book on the legendary Lon Chaney will please many fans of the late actor. The author, who was born into the motion-picture industry (his father, Larry Blake, was an actor who played a small role in the 1957 Chaney biopic *MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES*) is a professional

Continued on page 113

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It doesn't take a Great Detective to figure out which episode has produced this particular production still of Sherlock Holmes (Jeremy Brett) and Dr. Watson (Edward Hardwicke). It's from *THE RED CIRCLE*.

### THREE GABLES

*Continued from page 99*

It's a touch, but I hope it says much. Now, behind his back, I say to Isadora, 'You nearly brought about the death of my friend, John Watson!'

As Brett acted out that final line with full force and flashing eyes, an accusing finger stabbing in my direction, I really felt a tingle up my back. If that moment transfers to the screen with the same effect, it will be special. This anger towards Isadora is also an accurate concept of Holmes' regard for his biographer. We are not talking about 20th-century buddy-buddies here, but of Victorian gents whose reserve has few chinks. That Holmes exposes his temper and concern about his friend behind his back seems to me to be absolutely correct and very satisfying.

It is but a few steps from regard and friendship to sex. (Well, for me it is!) In *THE THREE GABLES*, Holmes has to confront the only female villain in the Canon (I cannot regard Irene Adler in this light.) Dealing with *femmes fatales* is not exactly Holmes' forte. Brett explained: 'Holmes has a dilemma with women. I am filming a scene later which is the climax of the film. Holmes is faced with the brilliantly beautiful Spanish woman; they clash, rather like Tito Gobi and Maria Callas in the second act of *TOSCA*. She rushes toward him to tear his eyes out, and he grabs her arms to stop her. They are very close, eye to eye. I am not sure how I, as Holmes, am going to react. This is new territory for me. Holmes thinks it is easier to deal with a woman than a man, but he has forgotten the power of emotion in such an encounter. I always have to remember that sexually Holmes is a virgin.'

Perhaps it's that combination of brilliance and naiveté that makes the character so attractive to women. Brett tends to agree: 'Despite the white makeup and the black clothes, he touches or affects women in different ways. Some want to protect him, others consider him a challenge, and others think of him as a dream passion—the 'how wonderful to have a virgin in my arms' bit.'

Of course, the woman who perhaps feels more for Holmes than any other is Mrs. Hudson, and Brett was delighted that it has been arranged for Rosalie Williams to be in every episode. 'I have, I believe, misused her in a few episodes, which upset some people, so I'm going to make amends with this series. She is such an important character: She gives each story another color. It's another chance to show Holmes' reaction to a woman, although she may be little and old. I miss her terribly when she's not there.'

A couple of days after this interview, Jeremy Brett fell ill, developing a bad attack of asthma after staying

too long on a night shoot. For a short time, things looked serious. It seemed that not only the completion of *THE THREE GABLES*, but also that of the remainder of the series, was in danger. Brett soldiered on with the aid of an oxygen mask to ease his breathing and the use of a wheelchair between takes. The next film in the series, *THE DYING DETECTIVE*, could have been prophetic in a macabre way. However, after a two-week break, the actor was reportedly fighting fit, and the series, though somewhat behind schedule, began rolling again.

What will this new series be like? Well, I reckon it will offer more fidelity to the stories than the recent feature-length efforts, but somehow I cannot help feeling that perhaps some of the fizz has gone out of the product. It is not that Brett is older now—that really does not matter—but he really no longer resembles the lithe fellow of that long-ago series, *THE ADVENTURES*. The writers, too, in trying to inject something new into the proceedings, perhaps squeeze out the old. I hope it succeeds and that I'm just airing my world-weary cynicism. The Granada series has been wonderful, and Brett is the Holmes of our age, but, after *VAMPYRE* and *BACHELOR*, they are both in danger of tarnishing their images. The willow has been well and truly bent. Let's keep our magnifying glasses crossed that it doesn't break.

*David Stuart Davies is the author of Holmes of the Movies, The Tangled Skein, Sherlock Holmes and the Hentzau Affair, Fixed Point: The Life and Death of Sherlock Holmes, and Sherlock Holmes through the Magnifying Glass. He is copresident of the Northern Musgraves of Sherlock Holmes Society.*



Up a tree with the star voices of **BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES**. Clockwise from bottom left: Paul Williams (The Penguin), Richard Moll (Two-Face), Aron Kincaid (Killer Croc), Mark Hamill (The Joker), Arleen Sorkin (Harley Quinn), and Diane Pershing (Poison Ivy). Trapped in the middle: Kevin Conroy (Batman).

## ARON KINCAID

*Continued from page 92*

credits. **THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE** was the last picture Walt did.

**SS:** Really?

**AK:** He died in midproduction; he didn't die while I was working on it. It was the most expensive movie that Disney had ever made. It was budgeted, as I recall, at eight million dollars. The premiere was the biggest in the history of Hollywood, and that includes all the ones from the Golden Age. There was a red carpet, a canopied red carpet with gladiolas. There were vintage automobiles; there were fountains of champagne in the lobby; everyone was given gifts. I have a gold alligator tie clasp with little emeralds in the eyes. There were three orchestras. It was the most lavish thing I've ever seen in my life. And I knew instinctively that it was the end of an entire era. It really was the final thing. Nothing ever got better than that night.

**SS:** What a shame.

**AK:** Because in 1967, things were falling apart rapidly. That was sort of

the last hurrah. I have a recording of the entire festivities, narrated by Greer Garson and Army Archerd, the columnist. They took us first to the Brown Derby. Fred said, "What are you doing in this?" I said, "Well, I'm in some of the scenes with Lesley Ann Warren. I don't have to ask you what you did, because I have the script." And he looked at me and said, "Well, I have the script, too, but I'm not sure who everybody is." (Laughs) I said, "This is going to be a long movie, isn't it?" And he said, "Yes, it's even got an intermission. Well, let's fortify ourselves." So, we went over and had more champagne. I told him how I had done several episodes of **MY THREE SONS**, but had never met him. He said, "Well, there's a lot of people I've worked with who never met me." (Laughs) He was a fun guy. I had always, always liked him, because I was familiar with him from his films in the 50s—you know, **FAIR WIND TO JAVA** and **FAR HORIZONS**. I always thought of him as sort of a cowboy-type guy. It wasn't until years later that I realized what a big star he'd been in the 30s and 40s with **ALICE ADAMS**....

**SS:** And **DOUBLE INDEMNITY**....

**AK:** He was, I would say, just exactly the same off-screen as he was on. I think a lot of them were. The big ones. Like Imogene Coca, who was the sweetest person I ever worked with. On the other end of the scale, the most horrible person I ever worked with was Jerry Lewis—who, as Elliot Gould put it, was sicker than any disease he could campaign against.

**SS:** Any career disappointments?

**AK:** I wish I had been in films of the caliber of **LAURA** or **GASLIGHT** or **SUNSET BOULEVARD**—one of those pictures—but it wasn't meant to be. I think the best performance I ever gave was in a thing that was never even shown, with David Soul. It was an adaptation.

**SS:** **THE SECRET SHARER**?

**AK:** **THE SECRET SHARER**. It's shown at universities. It was made to educate people about Joseph Conrad. The only film that I can sit and watch and get a kick out of today is **SKI PARTY**. That's the only good one I did for AIP. The critics tore it apart, but some of the comedy routines between Dwayne Hickman and Frankie Avalon are good. The studio was nuts not to keep me in that kind of a character, because the next one, right after that, was **THE GHOST IN THE INVISIBLE BIKINI**, and that was a part that Bobby Morse should have played. I felt uncomfortable through the whole picture. I was miscast in that, and miscast in everything after that.

**SS:** What does the future hold for Aron Kincaid?

**AK:** Just going along. Just doing the voice things and continuing my painting. I'm happy to be in the spot that I'm in. I got a nice house, a good life. I regret the fact that I don't have a family, but, on the other hand, out of the 22 marriages that I have attended as a best man or an usher, only one of them is still together today. I think I avoided a lot of unpleasantness by not getting myself mixed up in all of that.

**SS:** We appreciate getting your views on Hollywood.

**AK:** The truth is always just beneath the surface. What was it that Oscar Levant said? "Once you scratch beneath the tinsel of Hollywood, you find the real tinsel."

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## SAM SPADE

Continued from page 85

In 1949, a New York court decided in favor of Warner Bros. However, California trial and appellate courts ruled in favor of Hammett, who realized that the outcome was important to all writers. When a Los Angeles judge finally settled the case in Hammett's favor in 1951, the decision had no financial impact on Hammett. THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE had left the air.

Still, perhaps Hammett heard just enough of Duff as Spade to formulate his dislike for the show. In 1952, Neuman was trying to write a novel at the beach house he had bought a little north of Malibu. His neighbors included publisher Bennett Cerf and author William Saroyan. Parties were not uncommon, and one day Neuman was introduced to a very ill Dashiell Hammett.

"He told me he thought Spier was full of shit and he didn't think much of the way Duff played it," Neuman remembered. "I wasn't the least bit offended. Are you kidding? I thought he was a king. He could have said anything he wanted. At least once a year, I reread *The Maltese Falcon*, just to remind myself how it's done."

Certainly Hammett's opinion was not based on any week-to-week familiarity with the series. Although he boasted of not listening to the radio shows, it's difficult to believe that he didn't catch at least a few seconds of Duff's years as Spade. If so, Hammett might have instantly recognized that the interpretation was not completely faithful to his novel—and dismissed it. This is likely, and it's even more likely that Hammett abandoned the show without learning what made it tick. So Hammett probably was telling the truth when he said he didn't listen to the shows. However his bad impression was formed, it was strong enough to jump up in a 1952 chat with Neuman.

In 1948, though, Duff and Sam Spade were riding high on CBS. "We were the number-one show of our kind," Duff said. "We were fast-moving, pretty funny, and we had some of the best writers in the business. But it wasn't all comedy. We did real heart-stoppers, too. We got down to the cases, as you have to when you're doing life-and-death situations."

Little did Duff realize that his career was about to hit a roadblock. In 1949, even though THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE was still extremely popular, CBS was getting nervous about Dashiell Hammett's links with pro-Communist groups. It was the era of Senator Joe McCarthy's red-scare campaigns and the House Un-American Activities Committee's witch-hunting crusades. The Hammett connection was too hot for CBS, and network executives decided to cancel Spier's series.

NBC was willing to take a chance. The show had a tremendous following. So THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE switched networks, but stayed on Sunday nights. NBC, though, didn't have the courage to stick with Duff. In his encyclopedic study, *Tune in Yesterday* (Prentice

Hall, Inc., 1976), John Dunning says that Duff left the show because he "had moved on to other things". Well, the anti-Hammett sentiment has been sufficiently documented. The part of the story that hasn't been told is that Duff's name, too, was appearing on industry blacklists. Sure enough, Duff was one of the 151 people listed in the infamous *Red Channels: The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television* (Counterattack, 1950).

Delivered to sponsors, networks, and advertising agencies, the book claimed to expose the Communist sympathizers in Hollywood. The unspoken suggestion accompanying this list was that any red-white-and-blue network or sponsor should not be associated with these actors, writers, singers, and directors.

Duff was in good company. Others listed in *Red Channels* were Hammett, Hellman, Edward G. Robinson, Orson Welles, Arthur Miller, Lee J. Cobb, Burl Ives, Zero Mostel, Burgess Meredith, Lena Horne, Leonard Bernstein, Jack Gilford, and Ruth Gordon.

On July 13, 1951, an article in *Hollywood Life* called Hammett "one of the most dangerous" Communists in America:

Hammett is said to be responsible for selling the red banner to dozens of men and women including actor Howard Duff, alias Sam Spade. Duff is also a member of one or more red fronts, and a definite red sympathizer.

"Well, I wouldn't know if Dashiell Hammett had any affiliation with the Communist Party," Duff said. "I certainly didn't, and a lot of the people in the *Red Channels* book didn't. It was at a time when they were trying to smear liberals. It was typical McCarthy smear stuff. About all I was was a half-assed liberal. I was in *Red Channels* and Hammett was in contempt of court, so the sponsor and the network, showing their usual great backbone, caved in,

and that was it. This is the part of the story that isn't told very much. It should be known. It was an outrageous situation. Lillian Hellman called it a scoundrel time, and I think she was quite right."

NBC and Spier auditioned all sorts of actors.

"They even auditioned Jack Webb," Neuman said. "Nobody could follow Duff."

NBC eventually settled on Steve Dunne, who, in the estimation of John Dunning, made "a boyish-sounding Spade". Even with Tuttle staying on as Effie, listeners just weren't buying someone other than Duff as Spade. A move to Fridays proved unsuccessful, and NBC canceled THE ADVENTURES OF SAM SPADE in 1951. It was replaced by CHARLIE WILD, PRIVATE EYE. By then, all of Hammett's radio shows had been yanked from the air—victims of what Harmon calls "guilt by association".

"I think it was the combination of the two of us—Hammett and me—that killed it," Duff said. "They didn't want me, but they couldn't cut it with the other guy. I was a little disappointed with Bill Spier, that he would go along with someone else. But what the hell. It was a long



Dashiell Hammett meets McCarthy

time ago. Bygones should be bygones. I have no regrets about doing the show. The big shame was that it should have been on television. It was right for television. It could have naturally made the jump from radio. I'm just sorry it was truncated and didn't go on. Then there were a lot of imitations."

In fact, when Hammett died in January 1961, John Crosby wrote in the *New York Herald Tribune* that television was overrun with "imitations of imitation Sam Spades".

As for Duff, he was one of the lucky ones who survived the blacklisting. "It did slow me down for a little while," he said. "I couldn't get on the air with a sponsored show until about four years later. But it didn't bother my picture career."

He landed his first TV series in 1957. Duff costarred with his then wife Ida Lupino in *MR. ADAMS AND EVE*. The actor has since been a regular on five other series, including ABC's *FELONY SQUAD* (1966-1969), in which he played a police detective named Sam Stone. There were memorable appearances in such films as *BOYS' NIGHT OUT* (1962) and *KRAMER VS. KRAMER* (1979).

Lurene Tuttle continued to be in demand as a character actress. She was a regular on three series: *LIFE WITH FATHER* (CBS, 1953-1955), *FATHER OF THE BRIDE* (CBS, 1961-1962) and *JULIA* (1968-1970 seasons of the NBC comedy). She died in 1988.

The late William Spier did not fare so well when television invaded America's living rooms. "Bill Spier could never adapt to film or television, although he had many chances," Neuman said. "As bright as he was, he couldn't get anything on track."

Neuman, however, embraced television and became one of the medium's most successful writer/producers. There was a Neuman script on Rod Serling's *TWILIGHT ZONE*, and he was the writer and producer of 11 pilot episodes that became series, including *MR. NOVAK* (NBC, 1963-1965), *PETROCELLI* (NBC, 1974-1976), and *KATE MCSHANE* (CBS, 1975). In 1990, he was the writer and executive producer of *VOICES WITHIN: THE LIVES OF TRUDI CHASE*, a fact-based TV movie starring Shelley Long as a woman with a multiple personality disorder.

Hayes turned to movies. He wrote the scripts for two of director Alfred Hitchcock's many classics: *REAR WINDOW* (1954) and *TO CATCH A THIEF* (1955). His other screenplays include *THE MATCHMAKER* (1958), *PEYTON PLACE* (1957), *BUTTERFIELD 8* (1960), *THE CHILDREN'S HOUR* (1962), and *THE CHALK GARDEN* (1964). He "semi-retired" to Dartmouth College, where he teaches screenwriting.

"I don't dwell in the past," Duff said, "but I think I'm still better known as Sam Spade than for anything I've done since. It's amazing how many people remember that show. I don't think any of us thought we were doing anything spectacular. We just thought we were doing a pretty good job. And that's the way we wanted it. I know that I had a good time. That's good enough for me. I don't have to look back on it in a golden haze or anything. We found out after the period was over that we were in the golden days of radio, and we didn't even know it."



*Mark Dawidziak is a film critic at the Akron Beacon Journal and the author of such books as The Columbo Phile and Night Stalking: A 20th Anniversary Kolchak Companion. Dawidziak has been researching Dashiell Hammett's association with Hollywood for five years. His interview with Howard Duff was incorporated in this article, which was completed only weeks before Duff's passing.*

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The Case of the Missing Scene! Basil Rathbone (RIGHT) puts a magnifying glass to a scene that was filmed, then cut, from *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (1939). Unfortunately, the scene explains much of the mystery.

## ADVENTURES

*Continued from page 44*

*Holmes:* That's why Mateo, here, was employed by Professor Moriarty—an important cog in the wheel of this rather extraordinary crime.

*Ann:* But, Mr. Holmes, why should he have wanted to kill my brother—and me?

*Holmes:* He claims—I'm terribly sorry, Miss Brandon—that your father killed his father many years ago, and stole the mine that made him rich.

*Mateo:* It's true! And I swear to kill Señor Brandon and all his family!

*Holmes:* This Mateo is an Indian—there's an element of blood vengeance to reckon with. That's the explanation of the weird music that has disturbed you so—a tribal funeral dirge, and to his mind a necessary preliminary to the ceremonial of murder.

*Ann:* How horrible! But what did . . . it doesn't seem possible that Jerrold Hunter should be part of this.

*Holmes:* Jerrold Hunter had nothing to do with it. As the family attorney, he knew of your father's early operations in South America, and of the threat over your brother and you. Whatever he has done has been only to protect you—and to spare you the pain of knowing.

*Watson:* But I saw Hunter, myself—closeted with Moriarty!

*Holmes:* Watson, I'd expect even you to see through that trick! Moriarty went to Hunter with a trumped-up lawsuit, to put us off the track.

The above dialogue stems from the first of three endings submitted—in this case, on June 16, 1939—after film-

ing had already begun. (Two later endings were turned in on September 25th, the third and shortest—and the only one not featuring Billy the page—making it into the final cut.) Not only is the June 16th submission a plausible explanation for much that remains murky in *THE ADVENTURES*, it is, as noted, precisely the sort of plot twist that might have delighted the heart of Conan Doyle himself. (It's at least as good a solution as he gives us in "The Five Orange Pips".)

Unfortunately, neither the writers nor director Alfred Werker could decide where to place their explanation without stopping the action dead. Whereas many consider the final scene in the Tower anticlimactic, a true anticlimax would have been a lengthy expository scene at Scotland Yard—so out it went, leaving us with Swiss cheese for a plot and the stubborn conviction that Jerrold Hunter should not have been trusted.

The film itself takes us swiftly from Lady Conyng-ham's to Professor Moriarty's—where Holmes finds two vital clues and Watson bathes in the lily pond. The first clue is a shaving brush:

*Holmes.* It's damp.

*Watson:* Damp! I'm wet through!

The second is a *Baedeker Guide to London* with a particular location marked by a withered flower:

*Watson:* The Tower of London! Sergeant Bullfinch!

*Holmes:* Moriarty without his beard!

Watson contends that the Professor, having dropped the Star of Delhi while beating a hasty retreat, has been foiled, but the Great Detective knows better:

*Holmes:* The real crime has not yet come to light. He caused a man to be murdered solely in order to dis-

tract me. He staged that fiasco at the Tower of London—why, I don't know. But of one thing I'm certain. It was all done with a purpose. Somewhere in London, at this very moment, something tremendous is happening. He said he was going to do it, and he's doing it now. The most stupendous, the most incredible crime of the century—the crowning act of his career! The crowning act! Watson, the Crown Jewels! We're wasting time!

\*\*\*

I slipped through his grip, and he with a horrible scream kicked madly for a few seconds, and clawed the air with both his hands. But for all his efforts he could not get his balance, and over he went.

—“The Empty House”

When it comes to landing on their feet, cats have nothing on Moriarty. As impersonated by Lionel Atwill in *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE SECRET WEAPON*, Moriarty falls to his doom through a secret trap door to the Thames. Yet he returned several years later in *THE WOMAN IN GREEN* and, in the person of Henry Daniell, missed his footing on a building ledge and fell to his doom yet again.

Of course, George Zucco got there first.

Holmes and Watson commandeer a cab and hasten to the Tower, where Moriarty is still merrily at work pocketing precious gems. The hansom overturns just outside the Tower gates (Holmes has been driving); the detective leaves Watson in the hands of the guards while he sneaks inside and races to the vault. The mortal enemies clash on the stairs, shooting at one another, but finally the Professor's gun misfires and Holmes takes the opportunity to hide atop the Tower. Moriarty follows, Holmes jumps him, a boxing match ensues, and the Napoleon of Crime falls to his doom in the yard far below. (Though Atwill and Daniell each owe their “decline” to their own efforts to escape, Zucco clutches frantically at the Tower battlements, only to receive a vicious knock-out punch from Rathbone; literally, Holmes “bumps off” his nemesis.)

Fade out; fade in to Inspector Bristol's office, wherein Holmes explains all and Billy arrives with Jerrold Hunter and—but no, that's ending number one.

## KILBURN

*Continued from page 56*

itself, but not this business of always waiting for the next job.

SS: One of the few films you made in the 1950s was *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE*.

TK: That was also when I had stopped acting! (Laughs) I loved being back in England so much that, anything I could do to make a living so that I could stay there, I did. I did some TV and I did a few citizen television films and some BBC things and this terrible movie, *FIEND WITHOUT A FACE*. I must tell you that I made an awful lot of cheap movies. As a child, I was in all very classy films, but when I grew up I did a lot of stuff that was not exactly top drawer. I remember most of the time the actors would say to one another when commiserating over being in these things, “Well, you know,

nobody'll ever see it.” In those days you figured that these movies were mostly shown in small towns. Instead of that, they play them on television! More people have heard of that than have heard of *GOODBYE, MR. CHIPS*!

SS: Do you get much fan mail?

TK: No, I don't, and I'm so busy here with my job that, when I do, I simply have to ignore it. I tried at some point to be polite, but I found that by doing that I just got more and more. I think there's quite a network of people who are interested. Last year, I got more letters than I ever had in my life!

## THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

Released 1939, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Director: Alfred Werker. In Charge of Production: Darryl F. Zanuck. Associate Producer: Gene Markey. Screenplay: Edwin Blum and William Drake. Based on the play by William Gillette. Director of Photography: Leon Shamroy. Art Directors: Richard Day and Hans Peters. Music: Cyril J. Mockridge. Running Time: 81 minutes.

### Cast

Basil Rathbone (Holmes), Nigel Bruce (Watson), Ida Lupino (Ann Brandon), Alan Marshall (Jerrold Hunter), Terry Kilburn (Billy), George Zucco (Professor Moriarty), Henry Stephenson (Sir Ronald Ramsgate), E. E. Clive (Inspector Bristol), Arthur Hohl (Bassick), Peter Willes (Lloyd Brandon), Mary Gordon (Mrs. Hudson), Holmes Herbert (Justice), George Regas (Mateo), Mary Forbes (Lady Conyngham), Frank Dawson (Dawes).

Fade out; fade in to a fish and chips bar, wherein Holmes explains some and Billy arrives with a missing cuff link and—but no, that's ending number two.

Fade out; fade in to a restaurant, wherein our heroes are dining. Watson reads of Ann Brandon's marriage to Jerrold Hunter (there's a match made in Heaven) while Holmes borrows a fiddle and starts to pluck away at the houseflies. Holmes' explanation for the attorney's actions is reduced to a simple “Whatever Jerrold Hunter did was done to protect Miss Brandon” and his remark, quoted in the excerpt from the June 16th script revisions, regarding Moriarty's visit to Hunter's law office. Nevertheless, the much abused Watson gets in last licks:

Watson: Those flies again!

The good doctor rolls up his newspaper and flattens several of the insects. Holmes laughs in approval.

Holmes: Very effective, my dear Watson.

Watson: Elementary, my dear Holmes, elementary!

And so *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*, the finest Holmes film made during Hollywood's Golden Age, perhaps the finest Holmes ever made, comes to an elementary—and hard won—conclusion.



According to Terry Kilburn, *GOODBYE, MR. CHIPS* is an almost forgotten film today, but in 1939 it was one of the most celebrated pictures of the year. Pictured: 13-year-old Kilburn (who played several generations of students) and Robert Donat (who copped an Oscar in the title role).

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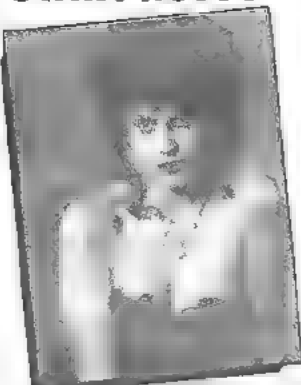
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## BOOK ENDS

*Continued from page 105*

makeup artist who has worked in motion pictures and television and had begun collecting material on Chaney in his teens. Discovering that there was very little known about the actor and more myth than fact contributed by the fan magazines of the day, Blake began the task of tracking down and interviewing surviving members of the Chaney family (including Chaney's younger brother, George) and people in the industry who knew and worked with him, including Jackie Coogan, Harry Earles, and Patsy Ruth Miller.

Blake's knowledge of makeup makes the description of Chaney's techniques easier for the layman to understand. The author goes to considerable trouble in describing the material used to create such lesser-known screen characters as Fagin in *OLIVER TWIST* (1922) and the Ape-Man in *A BLIND BARGAIN* (1922). Blake also destroys falsehoods surrounding the elaborate makeups the actor used in creating *THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME* (1923) and *THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* (1925).

Unjustly, film buffs have labeled Chaney a horror actor in the same vein as Karloff and Lugosi because of the film and video availability of his more famous films. This also has been played up in the many horror magazines since the late 50s, such as *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Actually, only four out of his 150-odd films

could be legitimately be classified as horror films.

During his lifetime, Chaney was often referred to as the "greatest character actor on the screen" by critics, because of his uncanny portraits of numerous Orientals, gangsters, clowns, and cripples, aided by grease paint, putty, and wigs. But it was in a "straight" role, minus any makeup, that he achieved one of his finest characterizations, that of Sergeant O'Hara in 1927's *TELL IT TO THE MARINES*, proving what a versatile actor he really was. Though makeup was necessary to fleshing out a character for cameras, Chaney believed that makeup was merely an introduction to the total canvas of the character.

Chaney was a private man and not prone to giving interviews. He never mentioned his first wife (Cleva, the mother of his only son, Creighton, known as Lon Chaney, Jr.) and had a habit of fabricating portions of his early life for fan magazines. He was a no-nonsense professional who lived only for his work and shunned parties and personal appearances, preferring staying close to his family and going camping. He discouraged his son from becoming an actor. "I've taken the bumps," he would say. Despite his success, Chaney never let his salary or praise go to his head. He often said, "Actors should pay more attention to their work, not their fan mail." Chaney was very popular with common studio laborers, grips, and electricians, to whom he went out of

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his way to lend money, sometimes anonymously, whenever a financial crisis occurred. He also preferred to let the studio guide his career and choose stories for him. He said, "Whenever actors think they can run their careers, it goes down the drain. Actors should stick to acting; their careers will last more longer." When the public learned that the actor was seriously ill, the studio switchboard was overwhelmed with callers who offered to donate blood. Through the years, the rumor persisted that the actor's premature death at 47 was caused by physically demanding roles, but Blake reveals that his death from bronchial cancer was caused by excessive smoking. The author's research has turned up six new films, never before part of any Chaney film list. Because of the industry's disinterest in film preservation and the limited life of nitrate film stock, only 40 of his 156 films survive today.

In addition to over 120 photos (which are reproduced on fine-quality stock), many never seen before (some from personal family scrapbooks), there are three articles written by Chaney (one of them on prison reform), a glossary of makeup terms, a bibliography, a complete filmography, and an extensive index. Some rare Chaney correspondence is also included, giving more insights into the actor. This book is recommended to film scholars and fans of the Golden Age of Hollywood.

—Bojak



# DA DARNING I SHOT

Quotations compiled by Sally Jane Gellert

The San Francisco fog has never been sufficiently glorified. It has neither the impenetrable yellow murkiness of the London variety nor the heavy stifling sootiness of the mist that rolls in on New York across the Hudson. The fogs are pure sea water condensed by the clean hot breath of the interior valleys and blown across the peninsula by the trade winds. They come in, not an enveloping blanket but a luminous drift, conferring a magic patina on the most commonplace structures, giving them an air of age and mystery.

ARNOLD GENTHE  
*As I Remember*

No man's still got a roommate when he's over 30 years old. If they're not lovers, they're sisters.

MART CROWLEY  
*The Boys in the Band*

Where they got lesbians, we'll use Albanians.

SAMUEL GOLDWYN

The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest fear is fear of the unknown.

H. P. LOVECRAFT

Let's talk about the black bird.

JOHN HUSTON  
*The Maltese Falcon*

[I]n his head Toussaint Johnson vowed to God or the devil or anyone who was interested that the men who did this would pay and the color of their skin wouldn't mean shit.

Only the color of their blood.

MAX ALLAN COLLINS  
*Murder by the Numbers*

Searchers after horror haunt strange, far places . . . But the true epicure in the terrible, to whom a new thrill of unutterable ghastliness is the chief end and justification of existence, esteems most of all the ancient, lonely farmhouses of backwoods New England; for there the dark elements of strength, solitude, grotesqueness and ignorance combine to form the perfection of the hideous.

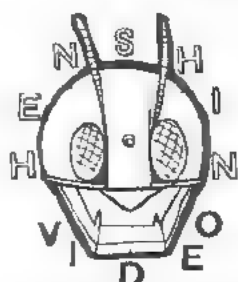
H. P. LOVECRAFT  
*The Picture in the House*

He is the Napoleon of crime, Watson. He is the organizer of half that is evil and of nearly all that is undetected in this great city. He is a genius, a philosopher, an abstract thinker. He has a brain of the first order. He sits motionless, like a spider in the centre of its web, but the web has a thousand radiations.

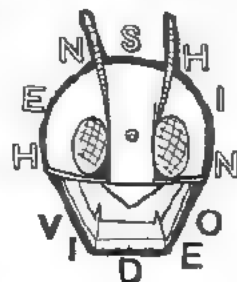
ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE  
*The Adventure of the Final Problem*

Out on Leicester Square—  
Diamonds down to my derrière!  
Everyone there—'ll stop and stare.  
They'll all kowtow!

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ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE (E)+(J)  
DAGORA THE SPACE MONSTER (J)+(E)  
VARAN (E)+(J)  
VOYAGE INTO SPACE (E)  
BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE (E)+(J)  
SON OF GODZILLA (J)  
GAMERA VS. MONSTER X (E)+(J)  
8 MAN (J)  
EVIL OF DRACULA (E)  
LAKE OF DRACULA (E)  
YOG- MONSTER FROM SPACE (E)+(J)

ULTRAMAN TARO: VOL. 1 (J)  
ULTRAMAN LEO: VOL. 1 (J)  
ULTRAMAN 80: VOL. 1 (J)  
BATTLE FEVER J (ES)  
JETMAN: VOL. 1-9 (J)  
JYU RANGER: VOL. 1-9 (J)  
DAI RANGER: VOL. 1-9 (J)  
FIREMAN: VOL. 1-7 (J)  
IRON KING: VOL. 1-7  
ZONE FIGHTER: VOL. 1-7

ESP-Y (E)  
WAR IN SPACE (E)  
KAMEN RIDER: VOL. 1-25 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER V3: VOL. 1-13 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER X: VOL. 1 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER AMAZON: VOL. 1 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER STRONGER: VOL. 1-5 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER SKYRIDER: VOL. 1 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1: VOL. 1-5 (J)  
KAMEN RIDER BLACK: VOL. 1-10 (J)  
TRUE KAMEN RIDER (J)  
KAMEN RIDER ZO (New!) (J)  
KIKAIER: VOL. 1-11 (J)  
KIKAIER 01: VOL. 1 (J)  
SPIDER-MAN: VOL. 1 (J)  
ZUBAT: VOL. 1-2 (J)  
ULTRAMAN: VOL. 1-8 (E)  
ULTRASEVEN: VOL. 1 (J)  
RETURN OF ULTRAMAN: VOL. 1-2 (J)

(J)= Japanese Language (E)= English Dubbed  
(ES)= English Subtitled

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The first appearance of Coffin Joe (Jose' Mojica Marins). The evil hero is a gravedigger who haunts a small town in search of the woman who will give him the perfect son to continue his legacy of horror. A classic of South American Horror, this is a gruesome piece of art and a masterpiece of gore and blood. Makes *Night of the Living Dead* look like *Driving Miss Daisy*! A movie that hasn't lost its power after 30 years and a must-see for all of Mojica's fans!

## STRANGE WORLD OF COFFIN JOE •1968•

3 episodes of blood, horror and despair. The first story shows a bizarre dollmaker whose creations look almost human. Almost? In the second story, Mojica shows us the pleasures and dangers of necrophilia. Then, in the third episode—in order to prove his theory that love is dead—Coffin Joe (Mojica) appears disguised as a doctor. He captures and tortures a couple of non-believers in the most bizarre, cruel and nail-biting moments ever put on celluloid.

## AWAKENINGS OF THE BEAST •1968•



This movie is so grotesque—and so ahead of its time—that the Brazilian military dictatorship banned it from video and theatres for 18 years! 'The Beast' of the title is LSD. Mojica shows the suffering of a drug user who is tormented by visions of terror and pain.

It's like *The Haunting* on acid! *Awakenings of the Beast* is a psychedelic jigsaw of violence and incredible images.

## HALLUCINATIONS OF A DERANGED MIND •1970•

Mojica put together all the scenes that were censored by the military dictatorship in Brazil in one movie! *Hallucinations of a Deranged Mind* shows the curse of a young man haunted in his dreams by Coffin Joe. For the first time, Mojica's fans can see the banned scenes from over ten of his movies! It's a mix of color and black & white scenes which prove the genius of this director and actor.



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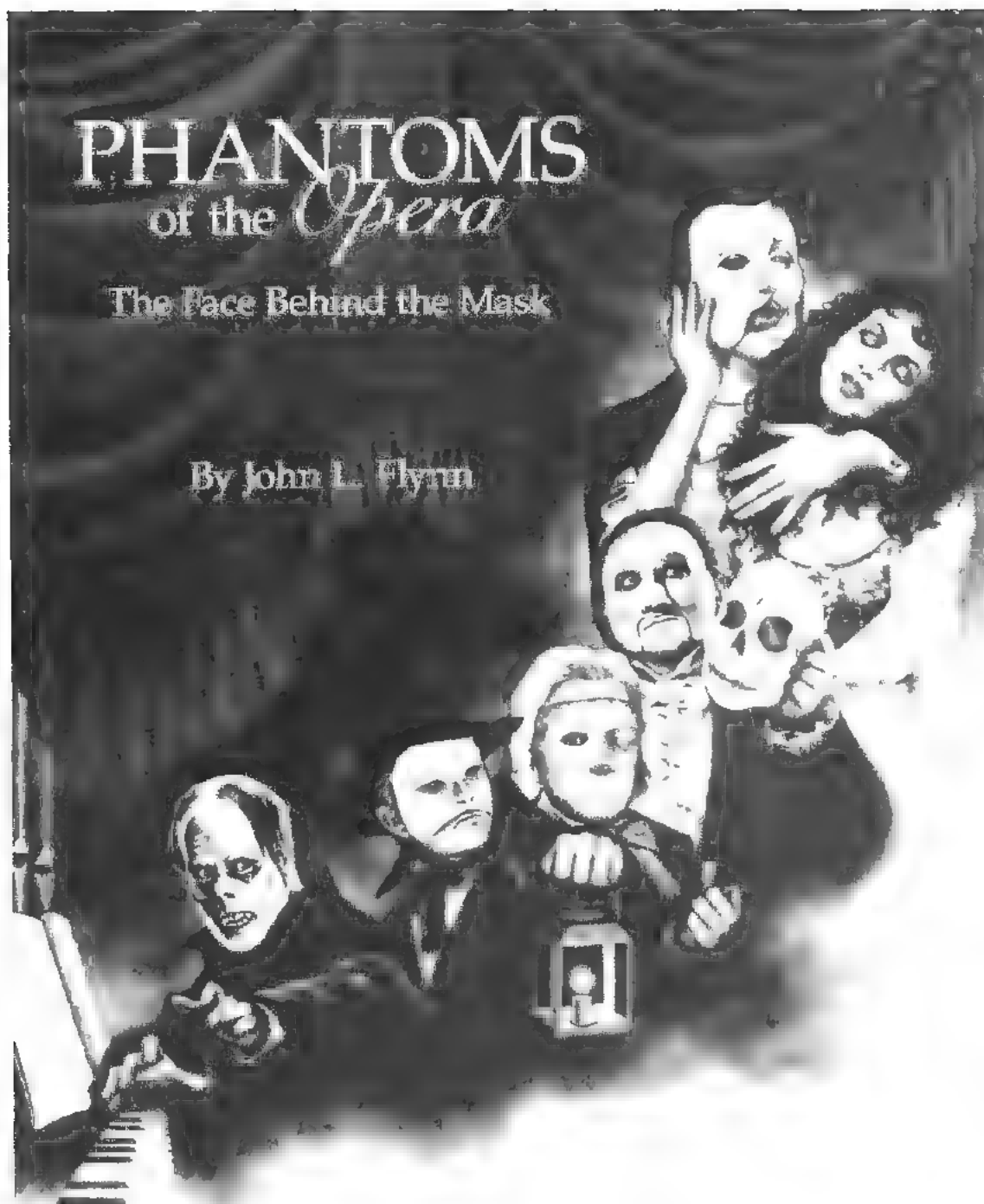
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## ~ PHANTOMS of the *Opera* ~

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# The Adventures of SHERLOCK HOLMES

*Basil*  
RATHBONE  
*Nigel*  
BRUCE  
*Isla*  
LUPINO  
*Alan*  
MARSHAL  
*John*  
KILBURN  
*Robert*  
ZUCCO  
*Robert*  
STEPHENSON  
*John*  
CLIVE

A 20th CENTURY FOX PICTURE • Darryl F. Zanuck IN CHARGE OF PRODUCTIONS  
DIRECTED BY ALFRED WERKER • COSTUME DESIGNER Gene Morkey • EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS J. P. MURPHY & WILLIAM BRANG





















TERRY K. LEBRON, JR., 1970

MG70



MGM  
Presents

# "FIEND WITHOUT A FACE"

The victim of an invisible fiend bears no mark of violence—only a look of horror on its face.





The mysterious science professor interrogated as to his knowledge of mysterious forces

M G M  
Presents

# "FIEND WITHOUT A FACE"



Marshall Thompson returns from a dangerous mission and finds Kim Parker waiting for him.

M-G-M  
Presents

# "FIEND WITHOUT A FACE"











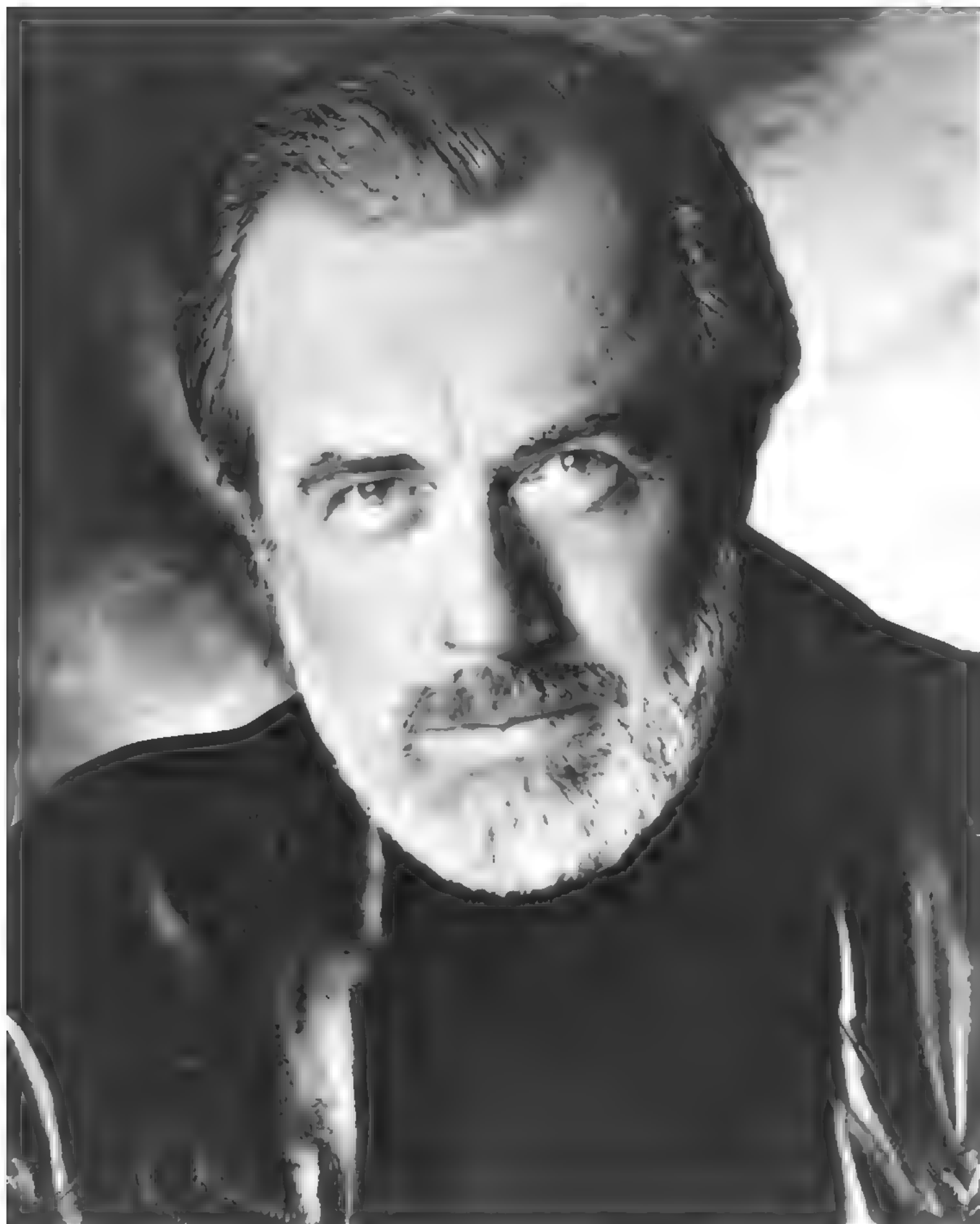
























A scene from the 20th Century Fox production  
"THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES"











**NEW HORRORS! MAD SCIENCE  
SPAWNS EVIL FIENDS!**

*...Taking form  
before your  
horrified eyes!*

**M.G.M.**  
Presents

# **FIEND WITHOUT A FACE**

**MARSHALL THOMPSON**

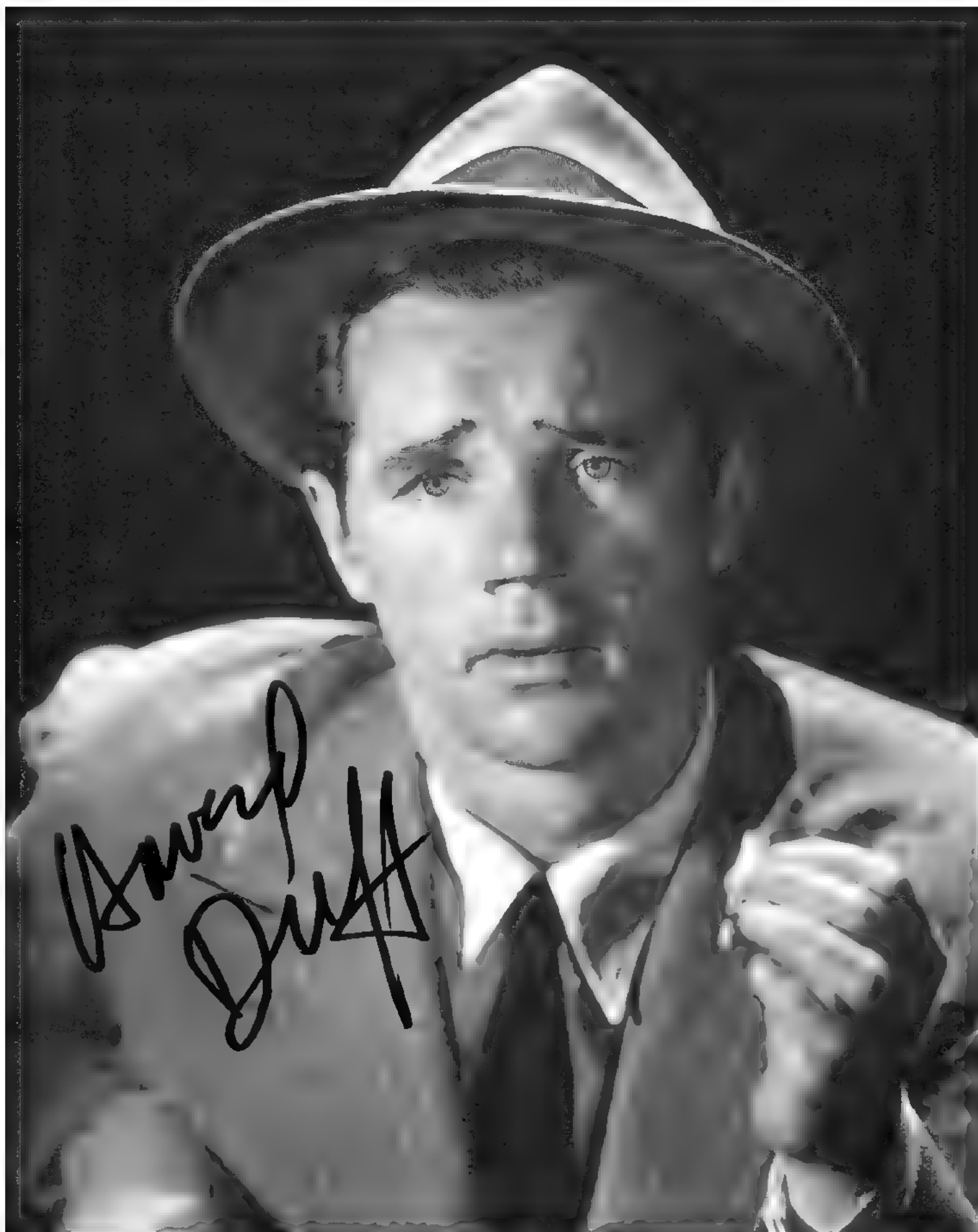
Directed by  
**HERBERT J. LEE**

Produced by  
**ARTHUR CRANSTON · JOHN CRITCOCK**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

**UNITED ARTISTS**









To  
Howard -  
with all  
best wishes  
from  
Hilbert











MILGRAM FILMS  
SHERLOCK HOLMES  
*contra*  
MORIARTY

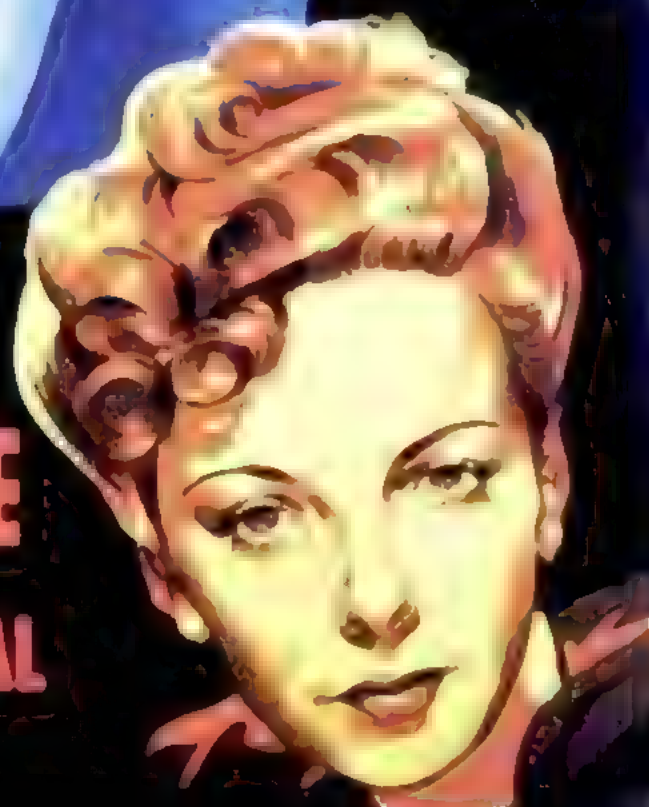


con

**BASIL RATHBONE**

*Ida* *Nigel* *Alan*  
**LUPINO • BRUCE • MARSHAL**

Director: **ALFRED WERKER**







HITS  
2 NEW MGM  
KARLOFF KING OF MONSTERS  
THE HAUNTED STRANGLER  
BRUTAL MURDER OF YOUNG GIRLS  
FIEND WITHOUT FACE

GARDEN  
DRINKS  
IF YOU WANT THEM

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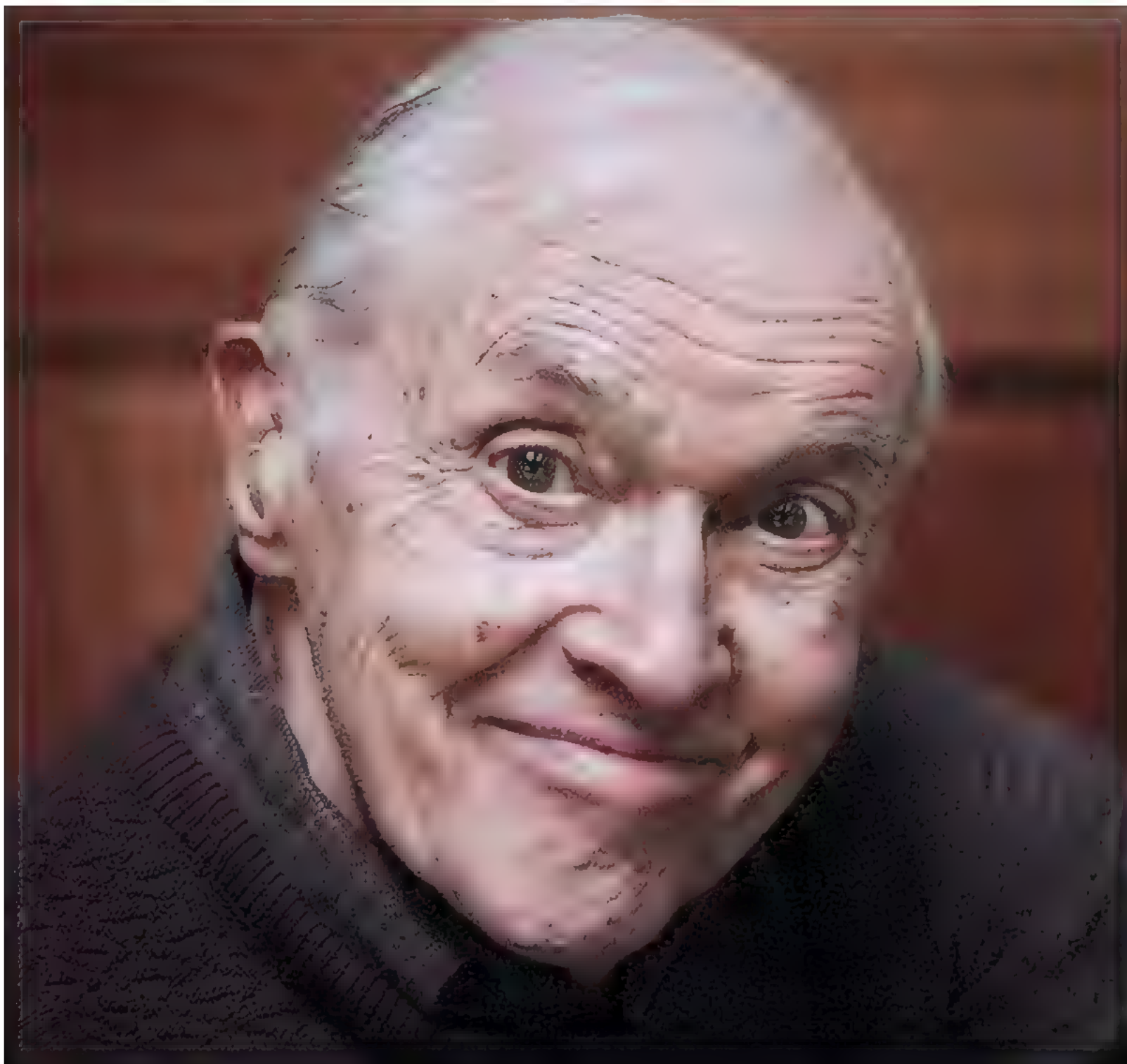
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# SHERLOCK HOLMES



*Garth* *Nigel* *Ida* *Alan*  
**RATHBONE. BRUCE. LUPINO. MARSHAL**  
*George* *John* *Kenneth*  
**KILBURN. ZUGO. STEPHENSON. ECLIVE**

Produced by  
**DARRYL F. ZANUCK** Directed by **ALFRED HITCHCOCK** Screenplay by **GENE MARKEY**













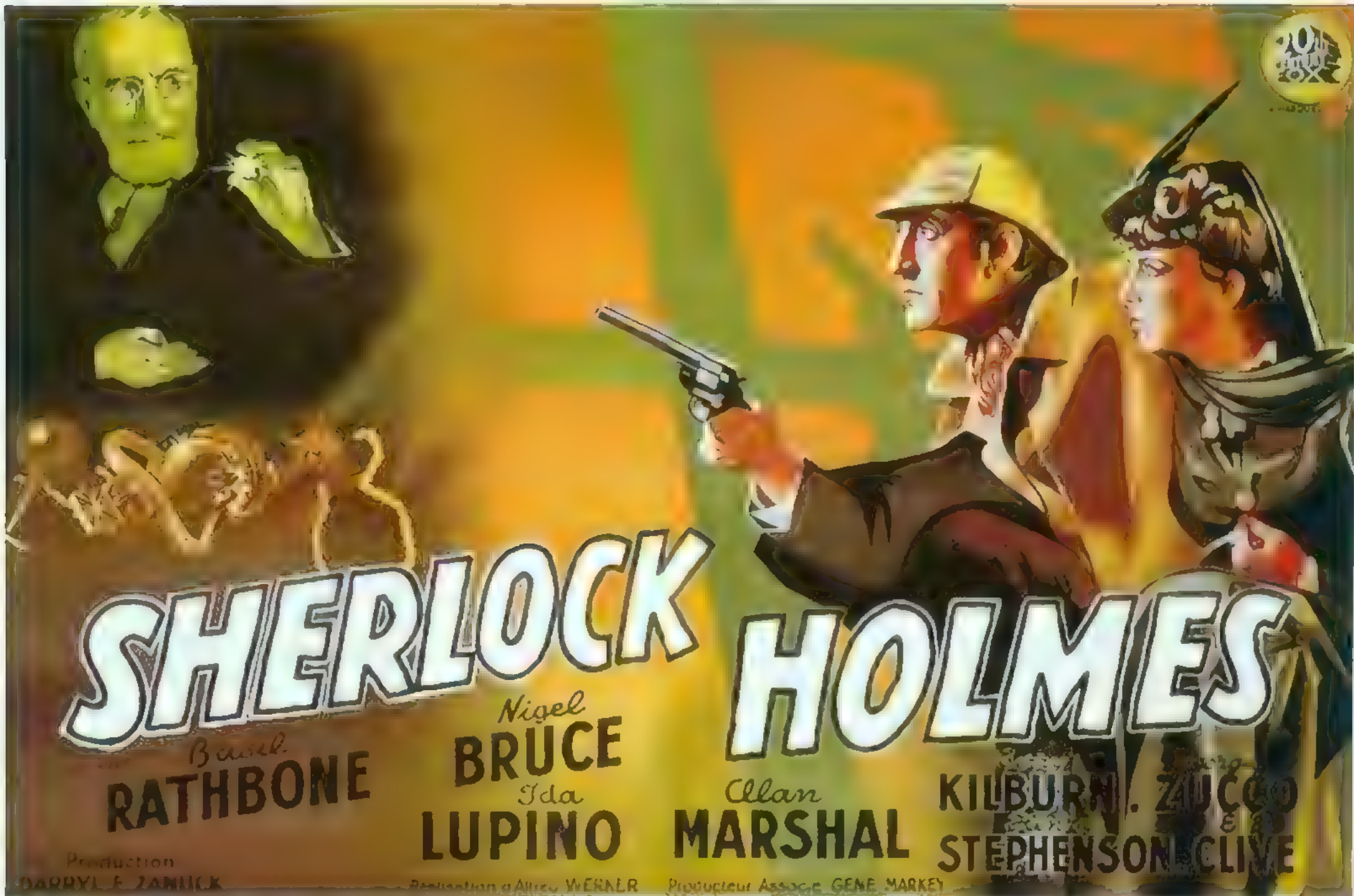












# SHERLOCK HOLMES

*Basil*  
**RATHBONE**

*Nigel*  
**BRUCE**  
*Ida*  
**LUPINO**

*Clan*  
**MARSHAL**

**KILBURN. ZUCCO**  
**STEPHENSON CLIVE**

Production  
**DARRYL F. ZANUCK**

Reproduction of Alice **WERNER**

Producteur Associe **GENE MARKEY**





STREET OF  
LOVE  
PATHELINE BA ST LUPINO  
MARSHAL







